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THE VICTORIAN AGE
OF
ENGLISH LITERATURE
VOL. I

THE VICTORIAN AGE
AND
THE REFORMATION OF
ENGLISH LITERATURE

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THE VICTORIAN AGE
OF
ENGLISH LITERATURE

BY
MRS. OLIPHANT
AND
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“The spacious times of great—Victoria”

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

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PREFACE

IT is always somewhat rash to attempt to determine the final place in literature of contemporary writers. There is nothing in which the generations make greater mistakes. Looking back upon the past age the reader smiles if he sometimes shudders to see Davenant or Congreve placed above Shakespeare, the age of Anne regarding as barbarous the age of Elizabeth, and in nearer days Southey placed on an equal rank with Byron or with Wordsworth. Posterity, we cannot doubt, will displace some of our greater and lesser lights in the same way ; but we must accept the disabilities of contemporary judgment along with its advantages, and with the certainty that what is written here is for the reader of to-day, and not for that eventual judge whose verdict will ultimately prevail, let us say what we will.

In a record of so large and widely spreading a literature as our own it is inevitable that some

names must be left out or too lightly mentioned. The present writers have endeavoured as far as possible to include all; but for any unintentional shortcomings in this respect must throw themselves upon the charity of the gentle and courteous reader.

Since these lines were written, we, and we may say all the English-speaking portions of the world, have sustained a loss greater than has been felt since Scott fell, like a great tower, changing the very perspective and proportions of the national landscape. Lord Tennyson has departed from among us full of years and honours: so long ours that we dared not wish to detain him, yet so much a part of all the noblest thoughts and hopes which he has inspired, in patriotism, in religion, in song, that it seemed almost impossible he should die. He has gone in a noble tranquillity and faith which is one of the greatest lessons he has ever given to the country he so much loved: and his death puts back this record almost as by the end of the epoch which it treats.

Other names less important have also vanished from the lists of living men between the writing and the printing of these annals. The reader will understand that this makes no difference to the estimate and criticism undertaken here.

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CHAPTER I

OF THE STATE OF LITERATURE AT THE QUEEN'S
ACCESSION, AND OF THOSE WHOSE WORK
WAS ALREADY DONE

THE period which witnessed Her Majesty's happy accession was not in itself a very glorious one, at least as far as literature is concerned. It was a season of lull, of silence and emptiness, such as must have naturally come after the exhausting brilliance of the days which had just gone by. It was a period of transition too, in which many great names were falling into silence, and the men who were destined to take their places were but slowly pushing to the front. But these newcomers seemed as yet poor compared with those whom almost every one living had known ; and their methods were not the same,—were even sometimes offensively opposed to them,—and the world had hardly made up its mind whether it was worth while to admire, or even to look closely

at, the rising generation. Even now, with the works of Carlyle and Tennyson and many other lights of no little brilliance to look back upon, we would hardly compare the prosperous and fruitful Victorian age to those few glorious years of the Regency to which Wordsworth, Coleridge and Scott, Byron, Shelley and Keats, lent their united lustre. It was a bad enough age in many ways,—though England never in all her days held so proud a position,—but, so far as literature was concerned, the glory could not depart from the eyes of the men who had been accustomed to receive fresh from the press the last poem of Byron, the last sonnet of Wordsworth, the last fairy trifle of Shelley or Keats, or,—most generally acceptable treasure of all,—the last Waverley novel. Perhaps there was almost too much splendour ; it seems impossible to believe that one year could contain much more than *Childe Harold* and the *Heart of Midlothian* ; and it is little wonder if the world, bewildered by the dazzling blaze of genius, threw up its cap and shouted as loud for Moore and Campbell, Southey and Rogers, as for any of the greater names.

Almost all of these were gone, however, in the beginning of the Victorian period : some in the vigour of youth, and some when approaching age. Only Wordsworth remained, who lived on for many years in the fulness of days and of honour,

to receive the only formal tribute that the Sovereign can pay to poetry. But even he had practically ceased writing ; and society in general was much in the condition of a crowd at the close of some great spectacle, when they pay their pennies and go home, some of them thanking Heaven that it is over, and some wondering whether they will ever see anything so fine again, but few indeed ready to turn their wearied eyes to a fresh exhibition.

The past age, however, was still present in its minor lights, although most of them had already wellnigh exhausted their powers of production ; and the world was still full of those who had known them and watched their progress. Indeed, it is most extraordinary to observe the gulf between their age and ours when we consider how little the dates of birth had to do with it. Even the youngest among us have known of Carlyle, at least, as a living personality, while very few among the oldest could possibly have any acquaintance with Keats except by his works ; yet Keats was only two months older than Carlyle. Scott had not been dead quite five years at the beginning of the reign, Coleridge hardly three ; and Coleridge's children were all living, though but feebly shadowing forth their father's greatness, notwithstanding the true poetical gift of Hartley Coleridge, and something of note in his sister Sara, whose *Phantasmion* was published in the

very year, 1837, with which our record begins. Of the lesser names, Southey was living in the peaceful and honourable tranquillity that his gentle and lovable spirit merited. He had received his appointment as Poet Laureate nearly a quarter of a century before, and was placidly engaged in editing Cowper, a congenial task. But the life before him was melancholy enough. In 1837 his first wife died,—one of those celebrated three Miss Frickers whose alliance was so oddly suggested as a step to the establishment of the great system of Pantisocracy, and whose names are for ever associated with the brilliant band of young poets,—and he had married for the second time Caroline Bowles, herself a minor poet of some reputation, who was his untiring nurse through some painful years. He died in 1843, and was succeeded in the post of Laureate by Wordsworth, who, however, hardly produced anything in this reign beyond some *Memorials of a Tour in Italy*, published in 1837. As late as the death of Southey there were several of the old society of wits and poets still remaining. Every one remembers the delightful account of the struggle for the Laureateship on that occasion, as described in the *Bon Gaultier Ballads*, “after the manner of the Right Honourable T. B. M.”; and how “young Alfred” made the very sensible suggestion that the poets should fight for the place.

Among the many objectors to the project come various long-familiar names :

"Mine are the lists of love," said Moore, "and not the lists of Mars" ;

Said Hunt, "I love the jars of wine, but shun the combat's jars" ;

"I'm old," said Samuel Rogers ; "Faith," said Campbell, "so am I" ;

"And I'm in holy orders, sir," quoth Tom of Ingoldsby.

Of Leigh Hunt we shall have occasion to speak in a future chapter. Thomas Moore, who was approaching sixty at the commencement of the Queen's reign, produced nothing after that date but a tale of no great merit called *Alciphron*, and a *History of Ireland* which has probably never been read since it was published. His mind also failed a year or two before his bodily strength gave way ; he died in 1852 at the age of seventy-three. Samuel Rogers, that strange mixture of banker and poet, whose breakfasts were so much better and more memorable than his poetry, was seventy-four, and had retired from the actual arena of letters to take the place, as a patron and host of poets, which suited him better. In this comfortable retirement he lived to a great age, dying in his ninety-fourth year in 1855. Thomas Campbell, a man of genius, entirely ignorant of his own powers, who wrote poetry when the spirit moved him, and verses when it

did not, was just sixty, and was yet to produce some poems quite unworthy of his fame, though a ballad or two, like that of "Napoleon and the British Seaman," still proved that the fire of true poetry was not entirely extinguished. Campbell died in 1844. Barham, the last-named in the verse quoted, belongs to a different group, of whom we shall speak elsewhere. Among other poets still living who had retired into silence, almost or entirely complete, we may mention Joanna Baillie, the authoress of those *Plays on the Passions* which had so unaccountable a success in their day, who was seventy-five at the Queen's accession, but lived for fourteen years longer in her peaceful retirement at Hampstead; and Lady Nairne, the author of the "Laird o' Cockpen" and of the still more popular "Land o' the Leal." James Montgomery, a mild and gentle poet, the author of many verses dear to pious souls, still lived to contribute to Victorian literature a little-noticed collection of hymns in 1846; while his contemporary and namesake Robert, generally known as "Satan" Montgomery, continued his career till 1855, though he had been extinguished some time before in his fictitious reputation as a poet by an amusing article of Macaulay's in the *Edinburgh Review*.

There had been many women of note among the writers of the departing age, especially in the

department of fiction. Of the three sister-authors, Jane Austen, Susan Ferrier and Maria Edgeworth, who had brought into so clear a light the real ways of life of the England, Scotland, and Ireland of their time, only the two latter remained. Miss Ferrier, whose great reputation rests upon three novels only, the last and least successful of these having been published in 1831, had entirely given up work, though she lived until 1854; while Miss Edgeworth, who had also apparently retired from the literary world, made one reappearance, when over eighty, with the story of *Orlandino*, which it would be unjust to compare with her earlier works. Another Irish novelist, Lady Morgan, who had created a great sensation thirty years before with her *Wild Irish Girl*, had also laid aside her pen for the while, though she reappeared a year or two later with a fierce onslaught upon the male of her species, entitled *Woman and her Master*. At the beginning of the reign this lady, grown old and resting upon her modest laurels, aspired to the position of a leader and patroness of the literary world, entertaining at her evening receptions the authors who had breakfasted with Samuel Rogers in the morning. Another *salon* of a different and perhaps more attractive kind was presided over by Lady Blessington, also an Irish lady, possessed of a good deal of talent, who worked hard as a journeywoman in the profession of letters,

writing novels and annuals, a fashion of the day, editing albums, and turning her hand to any work that offered. Miss Porter, the Muse of the *Scottish Chiefs*, was living too, and Mrs. Opie, the authoress of a series of novels with a high moral purpose ; but neither of them continued to write after the commencement of the reign. The same may be said of Mrs. Hofland, a writer of moral stories of a simpler kind for girls, and, like Mrs. Opie, the wife of a well-known painter. Another authoress of the day, Letitia Elizabeth Landon, better known by her initials as L. E. L., will be remembered rather by many little graceful trifles of verse than either by her novels or her more serious poetical efforts. Miss Landon belongs to a younger generation than any of those we have quoted, but the swift and melancholy end of her life obliges us to notice her here. The year after the Queen's accession she married a Mr. Maclean who had been appointed Governor of Cape Coast Castle, and, following her husband to his post, died in Africa a short time after her marriage. She had published in 1837 a small essay in autobiography entitled *Traits and Trials of Early Life*.

The old traditions of what might be called the correct school of fiction were most suitably represented by one who, though over seventy years of age at the beginning of the reign, had no idea of relinquishing his work—the much praised author

of *Tremaine*. Robert Plumer Ward, however, only started as a novelist at the age of sixty, and his first two novels, *Tremaine* and *De Vere*, were received with extraordinary favour. In the first year of our period, 1837, we find in a review of his *Illustrations of Human Life* the following tribute to his greatness :—

“There is no one,” we are told, “who has brought to his pleasing occupation”—*videlicet*, the writing of novels,—“a mind more enriched with the best knowledge drawn from the study of books ; an experience of life more various and mature ; an observation more attentive, or a taste more elegant and exact than the author of *Tremaine*.”

It is a criticism to live up to ; yet we fear there are but few now who could say at a moment's notice what manner of book *Tremaine* might be, or even who was its author. Two more novels, *De Clifford* and *Chatsworth*, together with a quasi-historical study of the *Real Character of the Revolution of 1688*, complete the list of Ward's contributions to the literature of the present reign. Another equally respectable school of fiction, that of the historico-sensational novel, was as worthily represented by George Payne Rainsford James. We have all been accustomed to laugh at the time-honoured scene with which his stories were wont to open, when the last beams

of the setting sun gilded the valley along which rode two horsemen, one of whom appeared to be some six or seven summers older than the other ; but we have had time since then to become accustomed to even more bombastic and inflated styles with perhaps even less literary merit to redeem them. We certainly cannot see that the historical novel was in the least degree improved by Ainsworth, though his tales did certainly march a little faster. Perhaps it is a matter of congratulation that, at least since the death of the late James Grant, we have had no exact representative of this school of fiction among us.

A very different class of adventurer in this branch of literature is represented by Thomas Love Peacock. We use the word adventurer advisedly, for we cannot regard Peacock's entry into the field of fiction as by any means an authorised one. One cannot help feeling that he did not want to write novels, but that he found that he could not get at the public in any other way. Overflowing with wit and satire as he was, and with so much to say on social subjects, the only legitimate outlet he could find was in the conventional form accepted by the public. The consequence is that his novels are not novels in the proper sense of the word ; they are rather a concoction of whimsical ideas, flavoured with bright dialogue and spiced with almost too great a profusion of

epigram, the whole being served up in a kind of novel-paste, something like that of a game pie, which is hardly intended to be eaten itself, its legitimate purpose being only to fence in and keep together the dainties within. For an extra seasoning, his extraordinary power of light, easy versification, specimens of which are scattered through all his novels, would have made up for many shortcomings in other matters. Peacock's principal works, *Headlong Hall*, *Crotchet Castle*, and *Nightmare Abbey*, had been published several years before the date with which our history commences, but his last novel of *Gryll Grange* appeared much later, in 1861, when the writer had reached the age of seventy-six. There is much in this last story which is in his best style, but we seem to miss the ease and *abandon* of his earlier attempts. Here, for instance, as in *Crotchet Castle*, we have an admirable study of the jovial, learned, cultivated, country parson, as sound in his theological opinions as in his judgment of different vintages, and as conscientious in the discharge of his duties as he is pleasant to meet at the dinner-table,—a species happily not so entirely extinct as the modern reformer would give us to understand; but yet it is hardly the same man. Dr. Opimian is like Dr. Folliott crystallised, and the whole story, of which he forms almost the most important character, has a new

air of formality, almost of stiffness, to which we are not accustomed from this author's hand. The dialogue is as witty as ever, but it is too entirely a dialogue, a set piece, not an interlude in the general composition. To return to our old similitude, we might say that the dish which Peacock served up at this late hour was composed of as good ingredients as the former ones, but it had been standing too long, and the zest was, to a certain extent, gone out of it. Yet we can forgive much to the author of such a disquisition as that of Dr. Opimian on the Wisdom of Parliament:—

“Why, sir, I do not call that a misnomer. The term wisdom is used in a parliamentary sense. The wisdom of Parliament is a wisdom *sui generis*. It is not like any other wisdom. It is not the wisdom of Socrates, nor the wisdom of Solomon. It is the wisdom of Parliament. It is not easily analysed or defined; but it is very easily understood. It has achieved wonderful things by itself, and still more when Science has come to its aid. Between them they have poisoned the Thames, and killed the fish in the river. A little further development of the same wisdom and science will complete the poisoning of the air, and kill the dwellers on the banks. It is pleasant that the precious effluvium has been brought so efficiently under the Wisdom's own wise nose. Thereat the nose, like Trinculo's, has been in great indignation. The Wisdom has ordered the Science to do something. The Wisdom does not know what, nor the Science either. But the Wisdom has empowered the Science to spend some millions of money; and this, no doubt, the Science

will do. When the money has been spent, it will be found that the something has been worse than nothing. The Science will want more money to do some other something and the Wisdom will grant it."

It would be difficult to imagine a pleasanter blending of fun and satire. The only other appearances made by Peacock in the present reign were a few scattered pieces, chiefly in *Fraser's Magazine*, to which he contributed—together with other things—a series of articles upon the various memoirs of his old friend, Shelley. He died in 1866.

Among the graver writers of the day we should mention, in the first place, the great historian, Henry Hallam. He also had been for some years silent, but the profound research and study required by the severe muse of history, authorise and justify such long periods of apparent quiescence. It was nearly twenty years since he had laid before the world his wonderful picture of *Europe during the Middle Ages*, undoubtedly the most entertaining and perhaps the most truly literary of his works. Nine years later came the *magnum opus*, the *Constitutional History of England*, a profound study of a profound subject, which has naturally little in the way of literary graces to recommend it to the ordinary reader. It is, indeed, impossible to read it at all without experiencing the naturally repugnant feeling that one is receiving instruction;

it is entirely impossible to play with, and somewhat serious to read, but of all books of knowledge, the easiest and most fascinating to study. From these grave treatises, the historian turned to a subject as profound in its way but capable of much lighter treatment. In 1837 appeared the first volume of the *Introduction to the Literature of Europe in the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries*, which was completed in 1839. To enclose himself yet more strictly within the circle of literary art, Hallam excluded from his subject most of the severer classes of books in which the aid of such art is little needed. Even history, "unless when it has been written with peculiar beauty of language or philosophical spirit," he considered to lie outside the sphere of his remarks. The result was not satisfactory. The history of literature is written in a style far less attractive than that of the constitution; nor do many of his criticisms inspire either respect for his judgment or sympathy with his taste. The world has justly refused to place the history of literature on the same level with either of Hallam's former works. Yet for those who seek the better part of failures as well as triumphs, there is something pleasing in the very love of books which is constantly coming before us. The end of his life was sad and lonely, and the books of

which he wrote were almost the only companions left to the bereaved old man. A higher and gentler sense of the beauty of his subject which he found difficult to interpret, trained as he was in the habit of sitting in judgment on the subtle questions and conflicting theories of history, would seem to have stolen into his mind; no man without the most genuine appreciation of literature could have described so feelingly how "the remembrance of early reading came on his (Milton's) dark and lonely path like the moon emerging from the clouds." Let us hope that he too felt its consolation, for fortune had laid her hand on him as heavily as upon Milton.

Among other living historians there is hardly any name of greater note than that of John Lingard, the only voice heard up to that time from the Catholic side. Dr. Lingard's principal work was done some years before the Queen's accession, but he lived on till 1851, fulfilling his quiet duties as parish priest in the obscure Lancashire village where he had always had leisure to pursue his historical studies, and from which, even the offer of a Cardinal's hat had failed to lure him. One feels almost doubtful whether to class among the serious writers that genuine curiosity of literature, Isaac Disraeli. There have been other such men with perhaps as wide reading and

as great a turn for picking up the stray odds and ends of literature, which acquire a fictitious value from the mere fact that the world has designedly and justly passed them over as little worthy of preservation : but perhaps no one has had the courage to cast the undigested fragments of an extensive and peculiar acquaintance with all kinds of literature upon the world, as Disraeli did. The *Curiosities of Literature* is a book which is delightful to pick up for a moment or two, but distressing to read persistently. It is mournful to see such immense knowledge put to so little use. Probably Disraeli was not the kind of man to have made any more practical use of his learning ; there seems to be a strange twist in his intellect which has, oddly enough, some resemblance to the curious sleight of mind which marked the much more practical career of his extraordinarily clever son, the late Lord Beaconsfield. The only contribution of Isaac Disraeli to the literature of the present reign was his volume on the *Amenities of Literature*, published in 1841.

Of a very different character was another of the graver writers of the day whom we feel bound to notice here, though, as a point of fact, he contributed hardly anything to the literature of the reign of Victoria. John Foster, a Baptist minister, was a man of no particular erudition, but with strong views of his own on many ordinary everyday

subjects which he felt it his duty to give to the world. He himself confessed his "total want of all knowledge of intellectual philosophy and of all metaphysical reading," but he believed that his own "observation and reflection" supplied all deficiencies. His essays, many of which were addressed in a series of letters to the lady whom he was about to marry, were highly valued in their time, especially those on Popular Ignorance, on Decision of Character, and on the reasons why people in the upper classes found a difficulty in appreciating properly the evangelical movement. In later life Foster contributed much to the *Eclectic Review*, in which his best-known essay, that upon Popular Ignorance, appeared. He died in 1843.

Another department of literature which claims our attention at this period includes the small company of men who were devoting their energies to the diffusion and popularisation of literature and knowledge of all kinds among the classes who were least able to educate themselves. The chief credit of this movement may fairly be ascribed to Lord Brougham, whose great talents and lofty position enabled him to originate and carry out conceptions from which others would have shrunk as unattainable; though, indeed, much the same work was achieved by the Chambers brothers in Scotland by dint of sheer incessant labour. Henry

Peter Brougham, the son of a Cumberland gentleman of small property, and through his mother grand-nephew to the historian Robertson, was born in Edinburgh in 1778, and educated at the High School and Edinburgh University. After being called to the Scottish Bar in 1800, and having tested his abilities by practising as Poor's advocate—*i.e.* the advocate officially appointed to represent those who were unable to pay for legal advice—on the southern circuit, he joined with Jeffrey and Sydney Smith in founding the *Edinburgh Review*, an enterprise of which we shall have more to say in a future chapter. To the first number of the *Review* he contributed three articles, and is said to have been responsible for no less than eighty in the first twenty issues. This was the commencement of that life of restless energy which kept Brougham always to the front in whatever circle he found himself, and led him to do much good work and many regrettable actions. A good story is told of him at this period which illustrates the clear and definite form which his ambition had already taken. The authorship of some of the articles in the first number was being discussed in Brougham's presence (the incognito of the various writers was very carefully preserved at first) at the table of Mr. Fletcher, a prominent Whig advocate, and the host spoke in high praise of a review of Professor Black's *Chemistry*. The writer of such an article

could, he said, do or be anything he pleased. "What, Mr. Fletcher!" cried Brougham, leaning eagerly forward, "may he be Lord Chancellor?" "On which," says Mrs. Fletcher, who relates the anecdote, "my husband repeated his words with emphasis, 'Yes, Lord Chancellor, or anything he desires.'" And Lord Chancellor he was some quarter of a century later. It is curious to compare this story with some similar predictions which have lately come before us, the confident expectation that Mr. Gladstone, then merely a brilliant young undergraduate and the ardent professor of an antediluvian Toryism, would come to be Prime Minister, and that young Tait would one day be Archbishop of Canterbury.

Edinburgh, however, soon proved too small a sphere to contain Brougham, and he determined to settle in London, having entered one of the English Inns of Court in 1803. In the same year he had published a work on the *Colonial Policy of European Nations*, which received considerable praise. In London he kept up his work for the *Edinburgh Review* and studied law, besides exerting himself in the anti-slavery cause, which gained him the approval and support of Wilberforce and his party. In 1806 he accompanied the Earl of Rosslyn and Lord St. Vincent on their special mission to Lisbon as secretary, and gained fresh credit for the ability he displayed in this

capacity. In 1808 he was called to the English Bar, where he achieved considerable distinction, though apparently more by oratory than by the other branches of forensic science which are more highly approved by the legal profession, and in 1815 was returned to Parliament as member for Camelford. With his subsequent public career we have little to do; it is enough to say that after being for a long time one of the most prominent leaders of the Opposition, he was raised to the woolsack in 1830, on the Whigs coming into power, a position which he retained till 1835. He was for a long time the chief adviser of Caroline, Princess of Wales, and the leading counsel for the defence at her trial. He did good work as the opponent of slavery and the advocate of law reform, but it is through the services he rendered to the cause of education—understood in its broadest and most catholic sense—that he comes into our sphere. In 1825 appeared his valuable *Observations on the Education of the People*, in which he urged the necessity of increasing the knowledge of the poorer classes by the introduction of popular handbooks such as would give a sufficient insight into many subjects that were now hidden from them. In the following year he formed the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge to carry out his suggestions, and wrote the first volume for their publication

himself, *A Discourse on the Objects, Advantages, and Pleasures of Science.*

In the second year of its existence this Society entrusted its publications to Charles Knight, who had already done something of the same kind of work on his own account. Charles Knight, the son of a Windsor bookseller, born in 1791, had till now lived a struggling life as journalist, editor, and publisher, his chief success having been achieved by a short-lived periodical called *Knight's Quarterly Magazine*, to which Praed, Macaulay, William Sidney Walker, Derwent and Henry Nelson Coleridge, and John Moultrie, were the chief contributors. A more efficient aide-de-camp Brougham could not have found, especially as his own multifarious employments would not allow him to devote too great a portion of his own time to the work, and he had already turned to the prosecution of another pet scheme, the provision of better scientific education for the upper classes, towards which a great step was made in 1828 by the establishment of the London University, of which the original project had been laid before the world three years before in the *Observations on Education.*

While working zealously for the Society instituted by Brougham, Knight conceived the plan of starting a somewhat similar enterprise on his own account, which shortly took form in his *Library*

of *Entertaining Knowledge*. His right-hand man in this and other undertakings was George Lillie Craik (1799-1866), who attracted much notice by a collection of popular biographies under the title of *The Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties*, an expression which has become almost proverbial. Among other contributions to the same series were his *Sketches of the History of Literature and Learning in England*, afterwards enlarged into a *History of English Literature and of the English Language*, published in 1861. Craik was also the principal editor of Knight's *Pictorial History of England*, begun in 1838, and the author of many other historical works. In 1849 he was appointed to the professorship of English History and Literature in the Queen's College at Belfast, which he retained till his death in 1866. Among other writers who contributed to the *Library of Entertaining Knowledge* may be mentioned Sir Henry Ellis, principal librarian of the British Museum, whose name is best known in connection with his immensely valuable collection of *Letters Illustrative of English History* (1826-46): and Ambrose Poynter, father of the well-known painter, and himself a great authority on all points connected with the fine arts, especially architecture.

To complete the record of Charles Knight's hard-working career we may mention his other most popular productions — the *Pictorial Bible*,

edited by Dr. John Kitto; the *Pictorial Shakespeare*, edited by himself; and *Knight's Store of Knowledge for all Readers*, to which, as to many other such collections, the publisher contributed articles of his own. In 1832 Knight started with Matthew Davenport Hill the idea of a *Penny Magazine*, which, upon receiving Brougham's approval, was set going, and attained an extraordinary circulation. The *Penny Cyclopædia*, a still more daring undertaking, was not attended with such success, and finally entailed a heavy loss upon its publisher. The magazine maintained its popularity for a dozen years, and was withdrawn when its sale declined in 1845. In the ensuing year, the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, which had lately sustained some heavy losses, made its last bow to the public, and retired from the stage, with the usual little address to its former patrons.

Brougham was apparently little moved by the fate of his unfortunate bantling, having too many other things to think of to concern himself about so small a matter. Though by this time an old man, he had still energy to devote to his various avocations as statesman, judge, man of letters and *savant*. Science in particular was—next to the exercise of his judicial functions—the great delight of his latter days. The extent of his knowledge, and the extraordinary variety of subjects it

embraced, was a wonder to all ; but it seems probable that the desire to know something of every subject prevented him from giving sufficient attention to any to obtain a really thorough knowledge. He was an extraordinarily prolific writer, but none of his works have lived, perhaps the best known being his *Memoirs of the Statesmen of the Reign of George III.* (1839-43). He died in 1868 at the age of ninety. In his latter years he had been so ill-advised as to write an autobiographical work, published after his death as the *Life and Times of Lord Brougham*, which has neither accuracy nor impartiality to recommend it to the reader. It is a significant fact that it was thought necessary to suppress the last volume of the *Life* as left by Brougham. Charles Knight survived his former patron for about four years, having also published in later life an autobiography, entitled *Passages of a Working Life during Half a Century* (1863-65). In the same connection may be mentioned another enthusiast in the cause of popular knowledge, Dionysius Lardner (1793-1859), who is chiefly remembered by his great enterprise of the *Cabinet Cyclopædia*, in which Connop Thirlwall's *History of Greece*, Eyre Evans Crowe's *History of France*, John Forster's *Lives of English Statesmen*, and other standard works were first published.

Very much the same kind of work as Brougham

and his society were doing in London was carried on about the same time with much more abiding success in Edinburgh by the brothers Chambers. William and Robert Chambers were the sons of a poor cotton merchant in Peebles, William, who was born in 1800, being the elder by a couple of years. Their father suffered considerable loss by the introduction of the mechanical loom, which put an end to his little establishment of hand-loom weavers. A draper's shop, which he opened at Peebles, proved no more fortunate speculation, one of the principal causes of its failure being the generosity with which Chambers offered unlimited credit to the French prisoners in the town, none of whom ever paid him a farthing. On the failure of the shop, the Chambers family moved to Edinburgh, where Thomas Chambers obtained a situation as manager of some salt-works. His son William was apprenticed to a bookseller at a very early age ; Robert, to whose education, as he had been intended for the Church, more attention was paid, attended a school in Edinburgh, and shared the garret which was all his brother could afford to pay for out of a salary of four shillings a week. The boys, who were both born students, studied together as well as they could in the early mornings. Many curious stories are told of the shifts they were put to at this period. In the dark winter mornings study was impossible, as fire or

candle was out of the question ; but William was fortunate enough to strike a bargain with a baker, whereby he engaged to read to his employer and his two sons as they worked at the oven, from five o'clock in the morning, for and in consideration of one hot penny roll, fresh from the oven, not to speak of the warmth of the bakery.

In 1816 Robert left school, and after some ineffectual attempts at tuition, and employment as a clerk in an office, from which he was dismissed as too stupid, set up, by his brother's advice, as a bookseller, with a stall in Leith Walk, his only stock consisting of his school books and a few old volumes belonging to his family. William, when his period of apprenticeship was over, also started a stall in the same thoroughfare, and was fortunate enough to attract the interest of a good-hearted book agent, to whom he had rendered some slight service and who trusted him with some cheap editions of standard books to the amount of £10. William taught himself bookbinding that he might save a few pence by buying books in sheets and putting them into covers himself. He also constructed for himself a rude printing-press, and bought some worn type cheap, with which he laboriously printed an edition of the *Songs of Burns* and also a *History of the Gipsies* written by himself. Things being now in a comparatively prosperous

condition,—the *Burns* had produced a profit of £9,—William and his brother Robert, who had himself done almost as well, determined to publish a magazine to be called the *Kaleidoscope, or Edinburgh Literary Amusement*, of which Robert was to be the writer, while William was to do absolutely 'everything else connected with it, except make the paper on which it was printed. The strain, however, proved too great for the two lads, and after about a year of struggle, the *Kaleidoscope* disappeared.

The bookselling business, however, prospered, and both brothers soon removed to new and better premises. Robert had also made a successful start as a writer, publishing in succession a number of works: *Illustrations of the Author of Waverley*; *Traditions of Edinburgh*, a book which excited the generous, ever-ready admiration of Sir Walter Scott; *Walks in Edinburgh*; a collection of *Popular Rhymes of Scotland*; a *History of the Rebellion of 1745*; of *Rebellions in Scotland*, and a *Life of James I.*, 1830. William produced his *Book of Scotland* in the same year, and the brothers also collaborated in a *Gazetteer of Scotland*. *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, the periodical upon which their prosperous career was permanently and finally established, first appeared in 1832—at first under the charge of William only, as Robert had shrunk from the

risk of the undertaking,—and in the same year the two brothers entered formally into partnership as the firm of W. and R. Chambers. From this time forward William and Robert fell naturally into the places most suited to their natures and to the common advantage, William taking upon himself the burden of the business management, while Robert devoted himself more entirely to literature. The publications of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge suggested a good and profitable example to follow. In 1833 was commenced *Chambers's Information for the People*, and in 1835 *Chambers's Educational Course*; in 1844 a *Cyclopædia of English Literature*, and in 1859 the greatest enterprise of all, *Chambers's Encyclopædia*, of which the first edition was completed in 1868. In his individual capacity, Robert Chambers produced anonymously a work upon the *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*, of which we shall have occasion to speak in a future chapter. Among his later books were *Ancient Sea Margins*, a scientific treatise published in 1848; the *Life and Works of Burns*, 1851; the *Domestic Annals of Scotland*, 1859-61, and that curious repository of odds and ends of information, the *Book of Days*, 1862-64. Robert Chambers died in 1871, the immense labour entailed by his last work having to a great extent worn out his

strength. His last years were spent at St. Andrews, the university of which had conferred upon him the degree of LL.D.

Greater honours awaited his brother William, who was twice elected Lord Provost of Edinburgh, a compliment which would have been paid to Robert also, but for the opposition excited among the most orthodox of the councillors by some expressions in the *Vestiges of Creation*. Much honour attaches to the magistracy of William Chambers from the scheme which he started or at least supported with all the weight of his official position, for the restoration of St. Giles's Cathedral—a work which was finally completed just before his death at his sole expense. William Chambers had written little in the meantime except an account of a *Tour in Holland and the Rhine Countries*, published in 1839; but the finest work of his life was the *Memoir of Robert Chambers, with Autobiographic Reminiscences*, which appeared the year after his brother's death. Judging only from this work,—which is full of graphic and delightful details of a *Self-Help* more interesting and genial than anything in Mr. Smiles', and which has a special charm from the pleasant picture it gives of the brotherly love subsisting between the two rich old men as between the two penniless boys,—we are inclined to think that William Chambers would have

been quite the equal of his brother, Robert, in literature, if he had followed his bent in that direction. William outlived Robert by several years, dying as late as 1883. Just before his death he was offered a baronetcy by Mr. Gladstone and accepted it, but the patent failed to reach him in time.

At the time of Her Majesty's accession the Chambers brothers were prosperous young publishers, in the full tide of one of their most successful ventures, the *Educational Course*, to which Robert Chambers contributed some of his best work. The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was also in its fullest work and quite confident of rapid success in the regeneration of the world. But the world itself was not greatly excited by these efforts; *il en avait bien vu d'autres*. Mr. Robert Owen was ready with a cut-and-dried plan for its instant transformation into a paradise of equality and labour; but the world only laughed and went about its business as usual in its old exasperating way. It was aware that strange things were happening, which it did not yet quite understand, in many ways. Railways had become an accepted commonplace, and steam communication with the most distant lands across the sea was proving to be not the wild legend that people in general—and the *Quarterly Review*, in

particular,—had believed it to be, though no steam vessel had as yet ventured on a longer voyage than that between Holyhead and Dublin. But science had begun to appear distinctly a thing to be encouraged, and it was gratifying to learn from the papers that “Dr. Andrew Smith has just obtained from the Government a grant of money to enable him to publish the whole of the zoological drawings made during the late expedition into Africa. A grant for a similar purpose has also been made to Charles Darwin, Esq., who brought to this country, after his voyage in the surveying ship, ‘Beagle,’ such an immense addition of species in different branches of zoology.” This far-off presage of things to come has a strange effect upon the reader nowadays.

Meanwhile for those that loved such subjects there were the works of Professor (afterwards Dean) Buckland, and Dr. Gideon Mantell on Geology, and other books on more or less scientific themes. For those who required yet more solid food there was some hope in the advertisement of Mr. Whewell’s work upon the *Inductive Sciences*. History was hardly at a premium, but there was plenty of excitement about the new Record Commission, the sixth which had been appointed since the beginning of the century, and the interesting personal

question of its relations with, and treatment of Sir Francis Palgrave. This might induce some inquiring minds to examine the singular production of that gentleman in the form of a kind of historical novel, on *Truths and Fictions of the Middle Ages*, the object of which was to bring more clearly home to the reader the manners of a bygone age, through the impersonation of two remarkable characters, the Merchant and the Friar,—Marco Polo and Roger Bacon. There was also a work of Mr. W. F. Skene's on the Highlanders, which was well spoken of; and if it were worth while to consider such matters at all, there was a queer wild *History of the French Revolution* by the man who was responsible for that extraordinary, undigested piece of nonsense,—“Sartor Resartus” was it called?—which *Fraser's Magazine* had been somehow persuaded into printing the year before. That author had got his lesson severely from the *Athenæum* of the day. “Originality of thought,” said that organ, in a pithy and decisive passage, “is unquestionably the best excuse for writing a book; originality of style is a rare and a refreshing merit; but it is paying rather dear for one's whistle to qualify for obtaining it in the university of Bedlam.” The whole book, it seemed, was marked by “inconsistency of thought and vagueness of expression,” and such an extravagance of style

as must be regarded as a "decided mark of the decadence of literature." That an unknown person like Carlyle should persist in writing, after such plain speaking as this, was no doubt a curious rebellion against all the laws of criticism.

The recent interference of Parliament in matters ecclesiastical had fluttered the doves of the Church, and produced a shower of pamphlets denouncing the iniquities of the new Commission. The Bishop of Exeter headed the attack, and a motley train of churchmen and laymen followed him. The people were called upon to note the "vast enlargement of the operations of this body," and solemnly warned that "every passing year would probably be marked by some fresh accession until the country be accustomed to see it invested with attributes compared to which the highest authority over the Church claimed by the Tudors or the Stuarts would appear powerless and insignificant." The recommendation of the Commission that the patronage vested in cathedral chapters should be transferred to the bishop of the diocese produced another storm of remonstrance. The most loyal churchmen, in their disgust at the proposed change, joined with others of a more secular spirit to demonstrate the unfitness of the bishops for such a trust.

Canon Sydney Smith related how these prelates were wont to treat the inferior clergy in a manner which none of their servants would submit to ; and Mr. W. S. Landor, in a "Letter addressed to Lord Melbourne," under the signature "A Conservative," brought even graver charges ; while the gentle poet-canon, Bowles, uplifted a plaintive voice of protest against the idea that any body of men exercised their patronage better than residentiary canons. The Church had its spiritual adversaries also, and ecclesiastical circles were looking forward with some interest to the advertised work of the Rev. J. H. Newman on Romanism and Dissent, which would no doubt prove that the only salvation lay in the Church of England. Others, however, distrusted Mr. Newman, and said that that last tract on the Breviary was not at all the sort of thing for a vicar of St. Mary's to write. There was even a sort of attempt in the academic circle at Oxford to get up an opposition party of men of more moderate views, among whom a young Scotch don, Mr. Tait of Balliol, was prominent : but this attempt came to nothing.

The outer world, however, was as yet little excited by these commotions during a quiet and peaceful period which was not ashamed of its own mediocrity. There was plenty of

literature for all requirements, if it was not of the very highest class. True, a new light had appeared in the world of fiction, and the public, which had hardly done laughing at the inexhaustible fun of *Pickwick*, was now chuckling over the pomposity of Mr. Bumble, and watching with awakening interest the fortunes of the Artful Dodger. Before Dickens there had been Captain Marryat and many others quite sufficiently entertaining for a not exacting age. There was Mrs. Trollope's *Vicar of Wrexhill*, and Miss Landon's *Ethel Churchill*, and Lady Blessington's *Victims of Society*, not to speak of the *Sayings and Doings* of Theodore Hook, with which the world of 1837 was mildly contented. Then there were always the Annuals to look forward to at the end of the year,—the *Keepsake* and the *Christian Keepsake*, of which James Montgomery was the great standby; the *Forget-me-Not*, with some charming little tales of Mary Howitt; *Fisher's Drawing-Room Scrapbook*, by L. E. L.; *Fisher's Juvenile Scrapbook*, by Miss Strickland; and all the picture-books—the *Flowers of Loveliness, with Poetical Illustrations* by L. E. L., and the *Gems of Beauty, with Fanciful Illustrations* by the Countess of Blessington. For those who sought something more distinctly amusing there was the new *Comic Annual* lately started by Tom Hood. And among

all these trifles the year 1837 produced two great books, one generally received with all the praise that it merited, the other, which had only found a publisher with great difficulty, sneered at and cried down on every side,—John Gibson Lockhart's *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott*, and Thomas Carlyle's *History of the French Revolution*.

CHAPTER II

OF THE MEN WHO HAD MADE THEIR NAME
ALREADY, AND ESPECIALLY OF JOHN GIBSON
LOCKHART, AND OF PERIODICAL LITERA-
TURE; OF WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR, AND
OF LEIGH HUNT

IN order to comprehend more clearly the position and objects of the class of writers of whom we are about to speak, the work that they set before themselves and their qualifications to do it efficiently, we are obliged to go rather a long way back in the history of literature to the time from which our modern periodical literature may be said to date. Periodicals of a kind had existed since Steele started his *Tatler* in 1709, but these were of an entirely different description, holding a sort of intermediate rank between the magazine and the weekly paper of our own day. For the origin of the magazine as we know it, it is not

necessary to go back further than the beginning of the present century.

It is now almost exactly ninety years since the first great undertaking of the kind was launched upon the world by a small band of daring adventurers, who had neither fame nor position to recommend them to the public, nor even sympathy with the common opinions of the society in which they lived, to gain a favourable hearing. Two young Whig advocates, whose unpopular political views scared clients away from them and left them with plenty of time on their hands, conspired, together with a young English clergyman,—whom Fortune or Providence had cast up as a sort of jetsam on the shores of Edinburgh, when he had been trying to set forth on a humdrum professional tour in an entirely different direction,—to astonish the world with a periodical of a very novel description. Francis Jeffrey, who may be regarded as the leader of the enterprise, though Sydney Smith claimed the honour of having suggested it, was a genuine Edinburgh production. Born in 1773, in one of the old houses of the Lawnmarket, the son of a clerk in the Supreme Court, he had been educated at the High School, from which he was sent to Glasgow University, and afterwards for a short time to Queen's College, Oxford—but returned to

study law in Edinburgh at the age of nineteen, and was called to the Scottish Bar two years later, in 1794. He was among the lights of the famous "Speculative Society," to which all that was best in young Edinburgh then devoted much time and thought. Brougham, the second person of the mysterious trinity who were responsible for the new *Edinburgh Review*, was also a High School boy and a member of the "Speculative Society," as was also young Walter Scott, who, in spite of his Tory principles, was a frequent contributor to his friend Jeffrey's periodical. Sydney Smith, the last of the three, was an Englishman, *pur sang*, an old Wykhamist and a Fellow of New, not to speak of his Anglican orders, which, to say the truth, do not appear at this period at least to have lain very heavy upon him. His own inclinations, indeed, had been to the Bar rather than the Church, but family reasons made the latter more desirable. He had been two years curate of a small parish in Salisbury Plain, the squire of which appointed him tutor to his son, with whom he was to proceed to the University of Weimar. Germany was, however, at that time so disturbed by political convulsions that the original idea was given up, and "in stress of politics," says Sydney Smith, "we put into Edinburgh, where I remained five years." He

was now a year or two over thirty, and thus the oldest of the three, Jeffrey being only twenty-nine, and Brougham not more than twenty-three.

The first number of the *Edinburgh Review* appeared in October 1802, and immediately produced a great sensation, not only in Edinburgh, but throughout the nation. The authorship of the articles was kept an absolute secret, nor was it even known with any clearness from what quarter the new publication had come, except that Constable was the publisher. The great feature of the new *Review* was its absolute independence, previous periodicals having usually been hampered by their allegiance to some authority,—occasionally a Party, but more usually a book-seller. The literary and political opinions of the *Edinburgh*, however, were to be only those actually entertained by the writers. This independence naturally led to some of those attacks upon writers of established reputation—"giant-slaying," as Friedrich Schlegel called it,—which particularly commend themselves to the rising young men of each generation. The tendency was, however, not so marked as might have been expected; there was slaying, no doubt, but it was often of would-be giants, whose death under the scalpel of Jeffrey was more glorious than their life had ever been. The political opinions of the

writers,—though in Jeffrey's opinion the most important matter,—were at first expressed with great moderation, so that Tories like Scott were able for some time with a clear conscience to become contributors on literary subjects. The first numbers were edited by Sydney Smith, who, however, soon resigned his post to Jeffrey, and returned to England ; where, though he continued to contribute to the *Review* for a quarter of a century more, and gained a reputation as one of the finest wits of his time, he resumed, with modifications, the work of his profession, and found preferment in the Church, beginning with the appointment of preacher to the Foundling Hospital, and ending thirty years later with the canonry of St. Paul's, which he retained to his death in 1845. His works can hardly be considered as coming within our province, as, though he was for the first seven years of the reign acknowledged as one of the greatest ornaments of society in London, he did little or no literary work during that time beyond superintending the collection of his various writings for publication as a whole. His most successful work, perhaps, was the series of *Peter Plymley's Letters* on the Catholics, published about 1806, and his connection with the *Edinburgh Review* ceased in 1828.

Jeffrey, the "arch-critic," as he was sometimes

called, was universally looked upon as the soul of the *Edinburgh Review*. His work was marked by great ability and, we think, by a spirit of justice, or at least a desire for justice. That he made violent and bitter attacks upon authors who did not deserve his censure cannot be denied, but it is equally incontestable that he was saying what he thought was right. A striking testimony to the honesty of his intention is borne by Scott in a letter to Southey, whose *Thalaba* had been most unmercifully attacked by Jeffrey,—modern readers will perhaps think that censure was, in this case, allowable. Scott was desirous that Southey should send something to the *Edinburgh Review* in spite of the criticisms upon *Madoc* and *Thalaba*. “I can assure you,” he says, “upon my honour, that Jeffrey has, notwithstanding the flippancy of these articles, the most sincere respect for your person and talents. The other day I designedly led the conversation on that subject, and had the same reason I always have had to consider his attack as arising from a radical difference in point of taste, or rather feeling of poetry, but by no means from anything approaching either to enmity or a false conception of your talents.” This remark appears to us to give a picture as just as kindly of the motives which animated Jeffrey’s criticism. It was only a few months later that he sent his severe review of *Marmion* to Scott with a manly

note, hoping that it would make no difference to their friendship, but repeating that he had spoken of the poem exactly as he thought ; a statement which Scott received with his usual magnanimity, confirming his invitation to Jeffrey to dinner for the same night. Later on, however, Sir Walter considered that Jeffrey had, in criticising the former's edition of Swift, gone beyond the limit allowed to a friend in reviewing a friend's work. Such a reproach would be of little importance to the frantically incorruptible Jeffrey, the bigotry of whose literary virtue would recoil from the idea that a friend's book had any claim to favourable treatment ; as a rigidly upright minister has been known to give office rather to an enemy than to a friend of equal merit from a terror of acting unjustly. It must be remembered, however, that Campbell was a friend of Jeffrey's, and that Jeffrey praised *Gertrude of Wyoming*, a circumstance which seems to throw some doubt upon this rigid impartiality : yet something must be allowed in this case for the taste of the day.

The fault that we have nowadays to find with Jeffrey is rather that of extreme minuteness, the anxiety not to miss any detail, which seems to us to make him often miss the effect of the whole, and to find faults instead of beauties by his persistent habit of looking down, rather than up. This view is strangely borne out by an

anonymous friend quoted by Lockhart, who met Scott and Jeffrey together, and conceived an equal admiration for the conversation of both. He adds, however, "It struck me that there was this great difference—Jeffrey, for the most part, entertained us, when books were under discussion, with the detection of faults, blunders, absurdities, or plagiarisms: Scott took up the matter where he left it, recalled some compensating beauty or excellence for which no credit had been allowed, and by the recitation, perhaps, of one fine stanza, set the poor victim on his legs again." Such a tendency, which is by no means uncommon among those who devote themselves wholly to criticism, might even account for the praise of *Gertrude of Wyoming*, which, though far from a great poem as a whole, may in some small matters of detail be not undeserving of commendation.

Jeffrey remained at his post as editor for thirty years. During this time he had fought down the opposition to his progress at the Bar, and risen to the head of his profession, holding in succession the appointments of Dean of Faculty, Lord Advocate, and finally Lord of Session. After his elevation to the Bench he wrote no more, but continued to take a great interest in literature, and especially in the fortunes of the *Edinburgh Review*. He died in 1850. He

was succeeded in his editorial functions by Macvey Napier, an old contributor, who held at the same time the various offices of Clerk of Session, Librarian to the Signet, and Professor of Conveyancing in the University of Edinburgh. Napier was a man of large and varied knowledge, and was known as having edited the seventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*; but he made no particular mark in literature. He edited the *Edinburgh Review* till his death in 1847, his successor being Professor William Empson, the son-in-law of Lord Jeffrey. Brougham was still a contributor at the beginning of the reign, and had, in his usual hectoring manner, asserted a kind of authority over the whole review, bullying editors and harassing contributors as, during his Lord Chancellorship, he bullied the king and worried his fellow-ministers. Among the young contributors were two men of rising talent, of whom we shall have occasion to speak later,—Thomas Babington Macaulay, whose essay on Bacon appeared in the *Review* in the first year of the reign,—and Thomas Carlyle.

The *Edinburgh Review*, however, had long lost the lofty position it had occupied before any rival appeared in the field. The opposite side in politics was now quite as strongly represented, nor was there immunity from opposition even among the *Review's* own party. As far back as 1808 the

first blow had been dealt at its supremacy. The Tory party, which had at first accepted the *Edinburgh Review* chiefly as a literary production, the political side of which might be ignored as long as it was managed with studious moderation, began to protest when the latter became the most conspicuous, and the *Review* permitted itself to be made the vehicle of extreme opinions. The popularity acquired by the able writing of Jeffrey and his supporters, and the fact that there was no other periodical of the same class in existence, made the *Review* a most powerful agent for the dissemination of political propaganda. It was, therefore, decided to start an opposition review entirely under Tory direction, which was, like the *Edinburgh Review*, to be partly political, partly literary. Sir Walter, whose private feelings had been hurt by what he thought unwarrantable criticism in the *Edinburgh*, while his patriotism was revolted by an outrageous article of Brougham's upon the affairs of Spain, readily supported the project, which also received the approval and support of Canning. The last was a matter of great importance, as it must be remembered that in those days when newspapers were few and Parliamentary reports extremely scanty, the first intelligence of important events and the first development of the policy of Cabinets were often communicated to the public by periodicals of

this kind having relations with the great party leaders.

The new *Quarterly Review* was accordingly begun with all the strength of the opposing party. It was published in London by John Murray, the editorship being confided to William Gifford, who had previously acted as editor of the *Anti-Jacobin*, and had thus been brought into constant relations with Canning. Among other distinguished supporters of the new periodical were Sir Walter Scott, Southey, George Ellis, Croker, and the Hebers. Canning, though eager in forwarding the enterprise, had little time to contribute, though he is said to have collaborated with Ellis in a humorous article on the question of bullion which appeared in 1811; and Frere, whose assistance had also been expected, only contributed a single article. The *Quarterly* had, however, a great success, and caused much alarm to Jeffrey, who, in an interview with Scott, offered to pledge himself to exclude party politics from the *Edinburgh* should this rivalry be withdrawn. There were only four men whom he feared as opponents, he said, three of whom were Sir Walter himself, Southey, and Ellis. The fourth he would not name; perhaps, we might suggest that he was thinking of Canning. It was certainly unfortunate for him that all these champions should be on the opposite side. But the *Edinburgh* still

held its own, notwithstanding all opposition. The world proved wide enough for both : and Jeffrey admitted that the cause of good literature was advanced by the appearance of his adversary.

Gifford undeniably proved a strong editor, showing most of the qualities and many of the defects natural to a man who had served such a literary apprenticeship as he had. He was the son of a poor glazier in a small Devonshire town, and had followed the plough himself as a lad, till, after an accident which incapacitated him for hard work, he was led to cultivate another kind of faculty, acquired some education, and began, partly by his own efforts and partly by the support of the kind friends it was his good luck to find upon his road, to raise himself in the world. He was chiefly known by two bitter satires, the *Baviad* and the *Mæviad*, each of which is clever enough in its way ;—but it was mere butcher's work : no giant-slaying here, but a simple slaughter of the innocents. Perhaps, indeed, the poor little Della Cruscans may have got in this way more notice than would otherwise have fallen to their lot, just as a certain immortality was conferred upon Bavius and Mævius, of whom nobody would ever have heard if Virgil had not expressed his contempt for them. Southey said that Gifford regarded authors as Izaak Walton did worms, as beyond the pale of human sympathy.

He and Croker were supposed to be conjointly responsible for the savage attack on "Endymion," which was (falsely) said to have killed Keats; but here the natural bitterness of Gifford was no more cruel than was the impulse of the generous, kind-hearted Wilson, whose assault upon the young poet in *Blackwood's Magazine* was every whit as severe. Gifford retained the editorship in spite of failing health till 1824, when he resigned, and, after a short interregnum, during which his place was filled by John Taylor Coleridge, nephew of the poet, was succeeded by John Gibson Lockhart.

Meanwhile a new star had arisen in the north, in the original country of the *Edinburgh*. In 1817 William Blackwood, the founder of the well-known publishing house of Blackwood, a man of sound common sense and a profound insight in matters of business, determined to establish a periodical of his own. After a first unsuccessful beginning under the united editorship of James Cleghorn and Thomas Pringle, the energetic publisher took the management entirely into his own hands,—as has been invariably the case since his time, the head of the firm being always the editor of this earliest, strongest, and most permanent of monthly periodicals. He soon gathered round him a knot of the cleverest young writers in Edinburgh, and in a very short time *Blackwood's*

Edinburgh Magazine, as it was called, held as high a position as the *Edinburgh Review* itself. A reckless band of wild wits they were whose portraits hang round the old saloon in George Street ; the dark keen face of Lockhart, with its finely-chiselled features and thoughtful expression ; the noble presence of Wilson,—he “ whose going forth was comely as the greyhound, and his eyes as the lightning of fiery flame,”—his handsome features lighted up with that “ powerful expression of ardour and animated intelligence ” which won De Quincey to him at first sight ; the Ettrick Shepherd, with his plaid belted round him, and his rugged, kindly face ; among others of later date, and perhaps lesser degree, who have won their place in that Valhalla. The first and very sensational entrance upon the literary stage of the new magazine was made in a singular production called the “ Chaldee Manuscript,” written in a pseudo-biblical style, which hit off various prominent members of Edinburgh society, especially on the Whig side, in such a manner that every one knew who was meant, and satirised them with a reckless dash and, we might almost say, impudence of wit, which took the city by storm. Several hands were at work upon this production. Hogg was undoubtedly the originator of the idea, but we fancy a great part of the working-out depended on Lockhart and Wilson.

Sir William Hamilton is said to be responsible for one verse.

The brilliant knot of young writers who supported Blackwood established a kind of club at Ambrose's tavern, the doings and sayings of which, real or imaginary, were chronicled by one or other of them in the series of "Noctes Ambrosianæ," which continued for many years to form in a manner the *pièce de résistance* of each number of the magazine. The choicest of these appeared between the years 1825 and 1835, when they were almost entirely the work of Wilson. John Wilson, better known by his *nom de plume* of Christopher North, was born in 1785 at Paisley, where his father owned a great gauze manufactory. His education, begun at a small school at the Manse of Mearns, where he seems to have had as much chance of developing his bodily as his mental powers, was continued at Glasgow University and ended at Oxford, where he was entered as a gentleman commoner at Magdalen, and where his athletic successes almost eclipsed those of a more thoroughly academical nature. Having been left with a great command of money at his father's death, he adopted no profession, but settled down at Elleray on the banks of Windermere, where he married, and devoted himself to poetry and ease, and where he attained by his first poem, the "Isle of Palms,"

a kind of brevet rank among the great lights of the Lake School. In 1815 the loss of the greater part of his fortune obliged him to seek more remunerative employment ; he removed to Edinburgh with his family, and was called to the Scottish Bar, but continued to devote himself chiefly to literature, his chief work at this time being a dramatic poem descriptive of the great plague of 1666, called the "City of the Plague." Neither of these productions has done much for his fame. He began his more lasting work by writing for Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh*, but, on the reconstruction of *Blackwood*, he devoted all his energies to the latter. To his genius is probably due the construction of the *mise en scène* of the "Noctes," with their few sharply drawn characters, Christopher North, Tickler, and the Shepherd,—especially the latter, in whom we can only recognise a very idealised portrait of the real Shepherd, James Hogg. No doubt there may have been in that strangely-mingled nature of Hogg's, with its combination of roughness and simplicity, and the delicate vein of real poetry underlying all, as much material as was required to draw upon, but the noble figure of the Shepherd in the "Noctes" seems to us to contain much more than the simple study from life could afford. The humour of the "Noctes" is as delightful as the interjected strains of a higher thoughtfulness are impressive. It is

difficult for the modern reader to enter into many of the allusions which refer to incidents and persons only prominent at that particular time and place. But an excellent selection has been made by a younger follower of *Maga*—as the genuine Blackwoodsman loves to call his magazine—under the title of the *Comedy of the Noctes Ambrosianæ*, in which most of the gems of the series may be found.

The “Noctes” were succeeded by a series of “Dies Boreales,” in progress at the commencement of our period, which were less successful. In 1842 a collection of Wilson’s contributions to *Blackwood* was published under the title of the *Recreations of Christopher North*; he had also written from time to time a number of stories of varying merit. He had in 1820 been appointed Professor of Moral Philosophy in Edinburgh University, though the candidate who opposed him was no less a person than Sir William Hamilton; the election was conducted entirely on party lines, and Wilson, of course, was the Tory candidate. He made, however, an excellent professor, and filled the chair with great success for more than thirty years. He died in 1854.

The name of Wilson brings before us, at the same time, that of a personage who bore very little resemblance to him, physical or mental. It must have been a singular sight that, which could often be seen on the Cumberland hills or in the country

round Edinburgh, of the athletic form of Wilson striding along with the queer, little boyish figure in its shabby clothes trotting at his heels. This strange companion was the English Opium-eater, as he was called in Edinburgh, Thomas de Quincey, whose career had been at least as extraordinary as his appearance. He was born at Manchester in 1785,—the same year as Wilson,—and was the son of a wealthy merchant. His education was conducted in a broken, irregular sort of way, chiefly at Bath and Manchester Schools, from the latter of which he ran away at seventeen, and, after reporting himself at his mother's house—his father having long been dead—commenced an extraordinary life of vagabondage, to which his family, in a kind of despair, were induced to give their sanction, even making him a small weekly allowance as long as he kept them informed of his whereabouts. After wandering over the greater part of North Wales, he suddenly disappeared from all eyes, having secretly journeyed to London where he had some wild idea of raising money on his expectations from the Jews. The miseries of his life there are more or less told in the "Confessions of an Opium-Eater," including many strange stories into which critics have thought the imagination of the writer had largely entered. De Quincey, however, always asserted that he had told nothing but the truth, though he dared

not tell the whole truth about those terrible experiences. The legacy left by this period of want and misery was perceptible in the agonising internal pains from which he suffered in later life and which were supposed to drive him to taking laudanum, and a certain look of horror which seemed to hang about his face and made Carlyle say, "Look at him : this child has been in Hell !" After about a year in London, De Quincey suddenly returned to his friends, by whose persuasion he went up to Oxford, as an undergraduate at Worcester, where he did little that was remarkable beyond studying German metaphysics, and beginning his pernicious habit of opium-eating, or rather laudanum-drinking. After leaving Oxford, he sought the friendship of Coleridge and Wordsworth, and finally took up his residence in the neighbourhood of the latter at Grasmere, where the next twenty years of his life were mostly spent. He assisted Coleridge in the publication called *The Friend*, and was on intimate terms with all the famous Lake School ; but his great ally was that Wilson of Elleray, of whom we have just been speaking, whom he had admired at a distance from the first time he saw him, as little, weak men do admire the big and strong, and whom he seems to have regarded with a sort of dog-like fidelity of attachment. In 1816 he married, and should have lived a happy

life but that the opium he took had begun to work out its vengeance upon him. His first real attempt in literature, passing over a year's editing of the *Westmoreland Gazette*, was perhaps his most remarkable work, the "Confessions of an Opium-Eater," which appeared in a series of papers in the *London Magazine* for 1821. The extraordinary autobiography contained in these "Confessions" loses nothing in the telling; the style of De Quincey is always refined and his English perfect, while for the more striking qualities of the narrator we would almost say that the pictures of the wanderings of the friendless lad through the pitiless streets, and his strange companionship with poor Ann of Oxford Street and her unhappy sisters, are almost too powerful. The sensation excited by the "Confessions" was immense. Many critics regarded them as entirely a work of imagination, and, as we have said, it is still doubtful how much of the narrative may be genuine; De Quincey, however, always asserted it to be so, and the point can never be cleared up now.

De Quincey continued for some years to contribute to the *London Magazine*, and also found employment upon *Knight's Quarterly Magazine*. At a later period, Wilson, who had introduced him as a personage in some of the "Noctes," obtained for him the *entrée* to *Blackwood's Magazine*, in

which his famous paper on "Murder considered as one of the Fine Arts" appeared in February 1827. The exquisite humour of this essay seems even more wonderful when it is contrasted with the rollicking fun of the introduction and the power of thrilling narrative shown in the appendix, which describes the murders actually committed by a fiend named Williamson. The artist who could draw Toad-in-the-Hole and his companions had naturally an additional title to the consideration of Christopher North, who felt a generous pride in the success of his *protégé*. His connection with *Blackwood* being thus firmly established, De Quincey and his family moved to Edinburgh in 1830, where he continued to write for that periodical, becoming also in 1834 a contributor to *Tait's Magazine*—an excellent but long extinct periodical, once largely popular, and on the Liberal side in politics—in which appeared his "Sketches from the Autobiography of an English Opium-Eater." In 1832 he published a novel called *Klosterheim*, which met with but little success.

At the beginning of the reign De Quincey was writing in both the magazines named, and continued to do so for twelve years longer, his principal contributions to *Blackwood* being the "Suspiria de Profundis," a sort of continuation of the "Confessions," and the "English Mail Coach," the latter containing some of the finest pieces of

his prose poetry. When his connection both with *Blackwood* and *Tait* was for some unexplained reason severed, he found a friend in a bookseller named Hogg, at whose suggestion he set about a collection of his own works which occupied his time for the remainder of his life. The first volume appeared in 1853, and the fourteenth shortly after his death in 1860; two more volumes were subsequently added to complete the collection. Strange accounts are given of his latter years, which he passed chiefly in a solitary lodging in Edinburgh, so as to be near his publisher. His family had lived at a cottage near Lasswade for some time after his wife's death, but were by this time dispersed in all directions. Two of his sons were dead, the others scattered: one daughter alone remained at Lasswade, and received her father from time to time when the spirit moved him to go there. De Quincey survived Wilson by five years, dying in December 1859.

Hogg, who died a couple of years before the Queen's accession, does not belong to our period. The remaining member of the little society which made the glory of Edinburgh Tory circles in those early days, was in some sense the most important of the party. Though his writings, with one exception, are not numbered among the classics of our literature, like those of De Quincey—though in power of thought and expression he was

perhaps never the equal of Wilson, none of that brilliant company displayed a greater versatility of genius, none certainly attained a higher position in the world of literature, or extended their influence over a wider sphere than John Gibson Lockhart. Shrewd and brilliant, and—in spite of the bitter wit which gained him in his youth the name of the “scorpion”—liberal in his criticism, powerful and versatile in fiction, and no mean master of the art of verse, Lockhart would be deserving of a high place among the writers of his day, even without the greatest work of his life ; but as the biographer of Sir Walter humanity owes him a debt greater than to any of his contemporaries. The whole civilised world has come at one time or another under the magical influence of Scott, and has followed and wondered and admired a leader whose influence is perhaps only less universal than that of Shakespeare ; it was left for Lockhart to strengthen and enlarge the sphere of that influence by showing the world that among the noblest works of the great enchanter there was none so great and noble as himself. Only one age could be privileged to stand by and witness the triumphs and struggles of that splendid life, and that only with the imperfect and confused insight of contemporaries, swayed and biassed by a hundred transient motives of petty prejudice or partisanship. In Lockhart's

masterly delineation, worked out apparently without art or effort, only with a loving care that no detail should be lost, no feature blurred or concealed, the man as he was in life stands forth to all time. There is no one of us but may pass what time he pleases, as the sharer of his walks or his studies, in the grounds of Abbotsford or the library in Castle Street ; and no man surely can return to the ordinary work of his life without being the better for the pure influence of that high companionship. In reward for such a work as this, we could hardly give too high a place to the writer.

John Gibson Lockhart was born in 1794 at Cambusnethan, where his father, a cadet of an ancient and honourable family, the Lockharts of Milton-Lockhart, was minister. His mother was the daughter of a well-known Edinburgh minister, the Rev. John Gibson of St. Cuthbert's, so that he, though in later years not much resembling this characteristic origin, was one of the many "sons of the manse" who have illustrated Scottish history. His father being appointed minister of the Blackfriars' Church in Glasgow, he was educated at the High School and University of that city, from which he proceeded to Oxford, through the medium of one of the Snell Exhibitions open to Glasgow students at Balliol. Lockhart's youth seems to have been chiefly marked by an irrepressible tendency to caricature everybody he came

across, especially his pastors and masters, and by a very strong turn for modern languages. In French, German, Italian, and even Spanish literature he was as well versed on leaving college at nineteen,—when he took a first-class, though most of his time in the examination was spent as usual in caricaturing the examiners—as most men expect to be with the reading of a lifetime. He spent a year or so in travelling in Germany, paying his expenses by a translation of Friedrich Schlegel's *Lectures on the Study of History*, and returned to Edinburgh to study for the Scottish Bar, to which he was called in 1816. He does not seem to have had much success as an advocate, but found a more congenial field in literature, being, as we have already seen, one of the original staff of *Blackwood*. In the famous "Manuscript," Lockhart is described as "the scorpion, from a far country,"—which is presumably Chaldee for Lanarkshire,—"which delighteth to sting the faces of men," and his mission, which he certainly discharged very thoroughly, was to "sting sorely the countenance of the man which is crafty" (Constable), "and of the two beasts," *i.e.* Cleghorn, the "bear," and Pringle, the "lamb," who had now become editors of Constable's *Scots Magazine*. Polemics, however, were by no means his only, though perhaps at this time his strongest point; for we believe that to many of the sharpest articles in

the "Noctes" it was Lockhart that contributed the salt and the pepper. His literary articles showed wide reading and, in general, sound, scholarly criticism, and he did good service as the champion of Wordsworth and Coleridge against the attacks of the *Edinburgh Review*. About this time, also, his "Spanish Ballads" began to appear in *Blackwood*. We cannot perhaps give any very high praise to these productions, which, however, had a great reputation in their day, but they are never without spirit, and contain some stirring passages. In 1818 one of the greatest events of Lockhart's life occurred, his presentation to Walter Scott, then at the very zenith of renown and success, with no *arrière-pensée* to detract from his happiness. A characteristic result of a conversation by which Scott was pleased and interested in his young acquaintance, was a note from the Ballantynes, a few days after, saying that as Mr. Scott found little time now to supply the historical department for their *Edinburgh Annual Register*, it would be "acceptable to him as well as to them" if Lockhart would undertake it,—a very pleasant windfall for a young *littérateur*.

Lockhart's intimacy with Sir Walter grew apace, and was soon made more binding by his attachment to Sophia Scott, whom he married in 1820. From this time forth he was his father-in-law's right-hand man, behaving towards him in all

respects as an affectionate son. His literary work had been continued with great success meanwhile. In 1819 he published an extraordinary *jeu d'esprit* entitled *Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk*, which purported to reproduce the impressions of Dr. Peter Morris, a Welsh physician, travelling in Scotland and entertaining his relatives with amusing and outspoken comments on every thing and every one he saw. These were by no means gratifying to the Edinburgh society, which found itself satirised with considerable freedom, and Lockhart himself seems in after days to have been rather ashamed of his joke: but Scott was immensely amused by it and thought many of the comments very just, so that the author cared little for other criticisms. *Peter's Letters* may be regarded as a kind of farewell to the reckless humour of Lockhart's younger days. After his marriage he attempted more serious work, his four novels being published in the four ensuing years, *Valerius: a Roman Story* in 1821, *Adam Blair* in 1822, *Reginald Dalton* in 1823, and *Matthew Wald* in 1824. These are of varying merit, the greatest praise being certainly due to the very powerful and intensely painful tragedy of *Adam Blair*, in which what we should call, in spite of the wild mirth of early days, the natural melancholy of Lockhart's genius has full scope. *Reginald Dalton* is a work of an entirely different

description, a tale of college life chiefly, full of liveliness and dash, with an occasional touch of intense pathos to temper it. The famous scene of the flight over the shifting sands of Holland would in itself give life to the dullest book. *Valerius* is one of many praiseworthy efforts, made at various times by various persons, to cause dry bones to live, and is not much above or beneath the level of most efforts of the kind. In 1826 Lockhart was appointed to the important post of editor of the *Quarterly Review*. He still, however, kept up his relations with Edinburgh, and besides contributing to *Blackwood*, supplied a sympathetic "Life of Burns," full of good judgment and good feeling, which still holds its ground as the best account of the poet, to Constable's *Miscellany*. The great publisher Murray was about this time starting a series entitled the *Family Library*, intended to rival Charles Knight's *Library of Entertaining Knowledge*, and Lockhart was chosen to superintend its production, and led the way himself with a "Life of Napoleon."

He was at this time at the height of his literary reputation: perhaps his private happiness was a little less complete, since he had for the time to give up Chiefswood, the cottage near Abbotsford where Sir Walter was wont to drop in at all hours, lighting up the whole place with his cheery presence. Lockhart's position at the head of the

Quarterly was one that exactly suited him, and rarely has a review had a more brilliant editor. But heavy troubles were awaiting him. Sir Walter was beginning to show signs of exhaustion consequent on the grand fight he was maintaining against his pecuniary embarrassments, and in a few years became a confirmed invalid. In 1831 died John Hugh Lockhart, the "Hugh Littlejohn" of the *Tales of a Grandfather*, and the next year came the great calamity of Sir Walter's death. Anne Scott followed him in 1833. The old, happy circle was thus much narrowed. From the time of his father-in-law's death, Lockhart devoted himself to the duty reserved for him as the literary executor of Sir Walter, that of preparing that biography of which we have already spoken. The difficulties of his task, especially as regards the journal of Sir Walter, are expressed in a letter to Croker, nearly twenty years later.

Besides many other views (he says) Scott clearly, and indeed avowedly, considered himself as writing what would one day be published. In his will he distinctly directs what shall be done with the money that his executors shall obtain in respect to this and other manuscripts. But he would never have considered himself as writing a diary that could be published *in extenso* during the life of any one whom he cared for. . . . Greatly feeling the responsibility imposed upon me, in selecting for publication within a few years after his death, I had the whole of his diary set into type, in order that I might obtain

the advice throughout of his most intimate friend, Mr. Morritt, and another person who knew very little of him but a good deal of society and all literary questions,—Milman. Three copies were struck off, and I now have them all, and I have no doubt that in course of time some heir of his will sell the complete diary for a larger sum than my book brought for the relief of his immediate representative, as succeeding to an overburdened estate. . . . Trusting to such intervention, both diarists (Scott and Moore, whose memoirs, edited by Lord John Russell, were under discussion) absolved themselves from any very strict watch over their pens—set down much which the whim, or very often the laziness of the hour could alone account for. . . . Posterity will know that I at least endeavoured to avoid the offending of Scott's surviving contemporaries, and you will not doubt that I had to spare Tories about as often as Whigs the castigation of diarising Malagrowther.

The first volume of the *Life of Sir Walter Scott* appeared in the beginning of 1837, and the seventh and last in May 1838. In the course of its publication a great grief fell upon the author through the death of his wife, but, with the noble example of the subject of his biography before him, the bereaved husband never flagged in his work. We have already spoken of the merits of this great work, one of the most valuable and real presentments of a great life, free from all fictitious adornment such as literary biographers are wont to lavish upon their subjects, and yet living and moving with almost the very breath of life, which has ever in any age been given to the public.

We have only to add a word upon the disinterested, and at the same time able manner in which the biographer has effaced himself,—great as was his own part in many of the scenes which he recounts,—to prevent any possible obstruction of the view of the principal subject ; though at the same time he is always anxious to do full justice to any other person who was so fortunate as to be prominently connected with Sir Walter. We seem to know Sir Adam Fergusson as well as Scott himself ; Laidlaw and Tom Purdie and the Ballantynes are distinct and living figures, and many of lesser importance are almost as clear, the author alone being discreetly withdrawn unless his presence is needed to make clearer or more life-like the scenes in which he takes part.

Lockhart continued to edit the *Quarterly* for the first fifteen years of Her Majesty's reign with equal success, if perhaps with diminished ardour. In 1852 his son, Walter, died, and his death was a heavy blow to his father. In the ensuing year, Lockhart resigned his post on the *Quarterly*, and retired broken-hearted to Abbotsford, then rented, and afterwards owned, by his daughter and her husband, James Robert Hope, a Parliamentary barrister of high reputation. About a year later he died at the age of sixty, some six months later than his old friend Wilson, and was buried at the feet of Sir Walter in Dryburgh Abbey.

We cannot take leave of the brilliant editor of the *Quarterly Review* without a glance at some of his contributors. Chief among these was one who had aided in setting up the *Review*, and who continued to be one of its most industrious writers after, as before the time of Lockhart. John Wilson Croker was an Irishman born and bred, but had long turned his back on the too limited sphere of his native country. Born at Galway in 1784, a schoolfellow of Tom Moore at Portarlington, and a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, we hear of him in his youth as amusing Dublin society with much the same kind of squibs and satires with which Wilson and Lockhart astonished the people of Edinburgh. In 1807 he was returned to Parliament for Downpatrick, and in the same year brought himself before the London public by a masterly pamphlet on the Catholic question, entitled *A Sketch of Ireland, Past and Present*. In 1809 he published a poem on the battle of *Talavera*, which received much praise not only from literary critics, but also from the Duke of Wellington and various great personages upon whom rested his hopes of political advancement. He was appointed Secretary to the Admiralty in the same year, a post which he retained with great credit for more than twenty years, steadily refusing promotion. He had joined heartily with his friend

Canning in the project of the *Quarterly Review*, and it is said that, with the exception of a period of five years from 1826 to 1831, there was not a number from 1811 to 1856 which did not contain at least one article by Croker. His criticisms were too often marked by a peculiar acrimony which was attributed to personal spite or revenge for satire directed against himself; but we believe this to be a mistake, as Croker appears to have been singularly insensible to adverse criticism. His review of Macaulay's *History* was undoubtedly an act of vengeance to which he had looked forward, but it must be remembered that Macaulay had treated Croker's edition of Boswell with such an unmerciful flaying as even an eel would cry out against. Macaulay and Croker had many duels in Parliament, in which the brilliant orator, whose arguments often had weak points for a watchful enemy to seize upon, did not always come off a victor. Croker was also unmercifully satirised by Disraeli under the character of Rigby in *Coningsby*, but he does not seem to have ever seen this attack until long after he was supposed to have answered it. He was the conscientious and painstaking editor of many valuable papers, including the *Memoirs of the Embassy of Marshal de Bassompierre to the Court of England in 1626* (1819), the *Suffolk Papers* (1823), *Horace Walpole's Letters to Lord Hertford*

(1824), etc. His edition of Boswell is chiefly known from Macaulay's criticism. He died in 1857, his last published work being a reprint from the *Quarterly of Essays on the Early Period of the French Revolution*, of which period Croker was commonly supposed to know more than any other Englishman living.

A newer recruit, whose articles added greatly to the readable qualities of the *Quarterly Review*, made his first appearance in 1836 with an article upon a gastronomical work called the *Original*, by Thomas Walker, a London police magistrate. Abraham Hayward was born near Salisbury in 1801 and educated at Peter Blundell's famous school at Tiverton. He was originally articled to a solicitor, but abandoned that profession for the Bar, to which he was called in 1832. In 1828 he set up, together with William Floyer Cornish, a periodical called the *Law Magazine, or Quarterly Review of Jurisprudence*, which speedily achieved a high position, and brought to Hayward, who became sole editor after the fourth number, a great reputation, especially among foreign lawyers and law-writers. In 1833 he produced a prose translation of Goethe's *Faust* which brought him into notice in the literary world. The article on the *Original* mentioned above with another on a kindred subject were much approved, and were republished some fifteen years later in a little

book under the title of *The Art of Dining*; no other essay of his achieved such a success unless it be the famous "Pearls and Mock Pearls of History" in the *Quarterly* of April 1861. We have classed him as a *Quarterly* reviewer, but he wrote also in the *Edinburgh*, *Fraser* and other periodicals. His principal subjects were law, German literature, the letters of Junius and gastronomy. On the last subject he writes with a combination of earnestness, sound judgment and artistic enthusiasm, which makes the sympathetic reader exclaim, "Here is indeed a man and a brother!" His principal fault as a writer is that he is too conversational: his anecdotes are pleasant and his style chatty, but too disjointed for a literary production. One feels that it would be so much pleasanter to hear *viva voce* than to read. In 1844 Hayward was made a Q.C., presumably as an able writer on legal questions, for his success as a barrister had not been great. In 1847 he produced for private circulation a volume of *Verses of other Days*, which did not increase his reputation. Besides the magazines, Hayward wrote a good deal in the *Times* and other newspapers, his most noted journalistic efforts being those in which he fought the battle of the Government in the *Morning Chronicle* against the charges brought by the *Times* of neglecting the army in the Crimea. His principal

reputation, however, was due at all times to his unrivalled powers of conversation. He died in 1884.

The *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviews* were respectively the organs of the Whig and Tory parties, supported by the party leaders and generally accepted by the rank and file. There was, however, as there usually is an advanced section of the more progressive party to whom the one was almost as odious as the other. To the group which gathered round Jeremy Bentham, headed by that sternest of philosophical disciples, James Mill, it appeared advisable to start a periodical on their own lines, and thus a new rival to the *Edinburgh* arose out of its own camp in the year 1823. The new organ of the philosophical Radicals, as their party was called, was entitled the *Westminster Review*, and its editorship, after being refused by Mill on the ground of his official duties at the India House, was confided to John Bowring, a gentleman of good family, born at Exeter in 1792 and chiefly known for his great linguistic powers, exemplified in his *Specimens of Russian Poetry*, and as the subject of a recent most unwarrantable arrest and imprisonment, at the hands of the Government of Louis XVIII. in France. A literary review projected at the same time by Henry Southern, a journalist of some eminence, formerly editor of the *Retrospective Review*, and later on of the *London Magazine*, was merged into the greater

undertaking, and Southern became joint editor of the *Westminster Review*, attending to the literary portion of the work, while Bowring, an enthusiastic disciple of Bentham's and later his literary executor, managed the political department. The firm of Longman, "our fathers in the Row," refused to publish the *Review* on seeing the prospectus prepared by James Mill, in which the position of the new Radicals was set forth as opposed to the Whig and Tory divisions of the governing body, neither of whom was said to have the slightest care for, or interest in the people; but another publisher was soon found, and the new venture was started with great vigour. Bowring, though ostensibly the political editor, was too much a man of letters not to distinguish himself in the other department also, to which he contributed many valuable articles upon foreign literature. The extraordinarily wide range of his knowledge on the subject is proved by the volumes of translations and selections from Russian, Dutch, Spanish, Polish, Hungarian, Bohemian, and Servian literature, published at various periods from 1821 to 1832, and supplemented at later dates.

Bowring was an ardent reformer, and did good service, especially in the cause of free trade, on which subject he had gathered a great store of knowledge in the course of several commercial missions on which he was sent by the Government

to France, Belgium, Holland, Italy, Prussia, and Turkey. He was one of the founders of the Anti-Corn Law League, established under the leadership of Cobden at the York Hotel, Manchester, in 1838. Bowring sat in Parliament from 1835 to 1837 and from 1841 to 1849. He afterwards became H.B.M.'s Consul at Canton, and in 1854 was appointed plenipotentiary to China, as well as to the Courts of Japan, Siam, etc., and Governor of Hong-Kong, all of which posts he filled with great vigour and ability, for which he was rewarded with the honour of knighthood. Among his later works were the *Kingdom and People of Siam* (1857), *Siam and the Siamese* (1866), and some translations from Chinese literature. He had formed in early life a gigantic scheme for a history, with selections, of the popular poetry of the world, and had prepared quantities of material and secured the co-operation of eminent men of letters in many countries; but the work was too vast to be ever completed. He died in 1872. Among many able contributors to the *Westminster Review* under Bowring's editorship, we can find none more brilliant than the young John Stuart Mill, then a clerk under his father in the India House, who became joint editor of the magazine in 1835. A fuller account will be given of him in a succeeding chapter.

Among the smaller magazines had also arisen

one which bade fair at first to dispute the supremacy of *Blackwood*. In 1830 Hugh Fraser and William Maginn combined with a namesake of the former, James Fraser, the publisher, to start a rival periodical to be called after one of its editors, *Fraser's Magazine*. Dr. Maginn, the real head of the enterprise, and a man of very remarkable ability, had got his chief literary experience in the very magazine which he now wished to attack. Born at Cork in 1794, the son of a local schoolmaster, and educated at Trinity College, Dublin, from which he received in 1818 the degree of LL.D., Maginn was at first a teacher in his father's school, but afterwards devoted himself to literature, and was a frequent contributor to *Blackwood* under various pseudonyms. His writing was easy and spirited, and showed signs of scholarship as well as natural capacity; but the license of attack which he allowed himself was almost greater than even the iconoclasts of that day approved, and his irregular habits made him a troublesome contributor to deal with. In 1823 he married and came to London, where he found employment on the *John Bull* newspaper, and was afterwards foreign editor of the *Representative*. His contributions to the new magazine were remarkable for their wit and power, but disgusted many by the scurrilousness of the personal attacks which appeared in *Fraser*.

Among the contributors he gathered round him were his countryman Mahony, Carlyle, Thackeray, Peacock, and many another well-known name, of most of whom we shall have to speak in due time and place. Francis Mahony or O'Mahony, born in 1805, began life as a priest in Ireland, but having while still in early life abandoned, or been abandoned by the heads of that sacred profession, first made himself known to the world in the very different atmosphere of those revels which, in imitation of the "Noctes" of *Blackwood*, were a kind of pretended necessity of every literary undertaking. Among the lively, somewhat riotous and somewhat profane crew of *Fraser*, Mahony called himself "Father Prout," the Friar Tuck of the jovial company, and his sketches had some success in their time, though not so much as his songs,—some of which, as that which tells of

The Bells of Shandon
That sound so grand on
The shining waters
Of the river Lee,

had something of the social glory which Moore before and Lover after him gained by their own singing of what was perhaps not very elevated in poetry. Mahony had also a wonderful gift of macaronic verse which he could knock off equally well in Latin or English, and which formed a chief

point of the Watergrasshill Papers in *Fraser*. He died in Paris in 1866, forlorn and poor, but still possessing something of the sparkle and charm of former days.

Maginn's career was 'cut short much sooner. His reckless manner of living had ruined him both in health and pocket, and in the last two years of life he was repeatedly arrested for debt, and was finally obliged to "go through the court," as the phrase was, *i.e.* take advantage of the Act for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors. He thus obtained his liberty in 1842, but he never recovered the disgrace of the proceedings, and died in the same year at the age of thirty-eight. His only complete work appears to have been a political novel entitled *Whitehall*, published in 1827. Among other literary work, he collaborated with his friend and countryman, Thomas Crofton Croker (1798-1854)—author of several works on the popular songs and folk-lore of his native country—in rewriting the latter's well-known *Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland*, of which the original manuscript had been lost. We do not know how much Maginn or any one else may have contributed to this work, but Croker was too modest to allow his own name to appear on the title-page when it was published, though undoubtedly responsible for the principal part of it.

So far, strangely enough, almost all the wits

and satirical writers we have had to chronicle have been of either Scotch or Irish extraction. The countrymen of Sydney Smith, however, were by no means ill represented in this development of literature. Among the most popular figures in London society at the commencement of the reign, none were in greater request than the pair of brothers whose chief title to notice, next to their great social gifts, was the memory of that matchless piece of pure, unalloyed, unmalicious fun which was still remembered after five-and-twenty years had gone by, the *Rejected Addresses*. James and Horace Smith were no longer young, the former being a little over and the latter a little under sixty years of age. James, who had written nothing since the *Addresses* but some dramatic sketches for Charles Matthews, died in 1839, but Horace survived him for ten years, and wrote several novels in the reign of Victoria, none of which can be said to have lived. If any of his stories be remembered now, it is probably *Brambletye House*, published in 1826, and that could have little more than an archæological interest.

Of a very different character was another leading English humorist of the day, who comes more properly within the scope of this chapter through his connection with periodical literature, the reckless Yorick who was wont to set the

tables in a roar with his boisterous fun, or keep a company sitting half the night entranced while he sat at the piano and improvised musical sketches and stories without pause or effort. Theodore Edward Hook, son of the Vauxhall organist and well-known composer, James Hook, was a true son of London, born in Charlotte Street, Bedford Square, in 1788. In his youth he distinguished himself by writing some clever farces, and perpetrating some astonishing practical jokes on a gigantic scale. His social talents attracted the notice of the Prince Regent, who appointed him to the lucrative post of Accountant-General of Mauritius, a curious promotion for a man whose one merit was that he was such good company. Hook, however, went to the Mauritius, enjoyed himself greatly, and, after muddling his accounts to an unheard-of degree, found himself responsible for the defalcations of his subordinates to the amount of twelve thousand pounds. Though he was cleared of any complicity in the matter on his return to England, the civil responsibility still lay upon him; his property was seized and he himself imprisoned for two years, though it was finally decided that the Crown claims should not be put into force during his lifetime. Meanwhile he had begun to use his pen, and a satire upon Queen Caroline earned him the editorship of the *John*

Bull, a newspaper set on foot in 1820 especially to vilify that unhappy woman. It was rather dirty work, but Hook did it well and perhaps served the community on the whole; unfortunately, the subject of his sarcasms died in 1821, and the *John Bull's* occupation was gone.

Between 1826 and 1838 he wrote a number of ephemeral novels, of which *Gilbert Gurney* was perhaps the most successful. In 1836 he was appointed editor of Colburn's *New Monthly Magazine*. The latter years of his life were spent in an unhealthy atmosphere; his great social powers were debased by the position he had sunk to as the parasite of great patrons. It was the fashion of his contemporaries to profess to regard him as merely Lord Hertford's jester, in which character he was bitterly satirised by Thackeray and Disraeli as the Wagg of *Pendennis* and the Lucian Gay of *Coningsby*. Through all this period of professional buffoonery, the weight of that immense, unredeemable debt lay on his mind; domestic sorrows were not wanting to add to his troubles, and his health was ruined by the life that he led. He died in 1841, "done up in purse, in mind, and in body," as he said himself. His effects were immediately seized by the Crown in partial satisfaction of his liabilities, and his family could only be provided for by a subscription, on which the names of his great patrons

were conspicuous by their absence. Hook's literary friends were not untrue to him, and Lockhart paid in the *Quarterly* a powerful tribute to all the possibilities of good that existed in him, and all the better qualities he had shown.

One of Hook's truest friends, who afterwards became his biographer, was the famous "Tom of Ingoldsby." Richard Harris Barham was born at Canterbury in 1788, and educated at St. Paul's School and Brasenose College. Ordained in 1813, he had held various livings with credit, and was the incumbent of a London parish, and priest in ordinary of the Chapel Royal when he first became known in literature. His early attempts, which included two novels, were not successful, and indeed Barham would probably never have been known to posterity had he not been induced, when his old schoolfellow Richard Bentley started his *Miscellany* in 1837 under the conduct of Charles Dickens, to contribute some jocular pieces, both in verse and prose, to that new periodical. These contributions formed the nucleus of the *Ingoldsby Legends*. They were received with general approval, and he continued them during several years, many appearing in *Bentley's Miscellany*, and some in the *New Monthly*, then edited by Hook. Their popularity has never since flagged, and it must be admitted that they are of the best of their kind, of whatever value that kind may be.

Barham died in 1845, as one might say in the odour of sanctity, for he continued to receive ecclesiastical preferment after, as well as before the publication of the *Ingoldsby Legends*.

Of a very different class from those of whom we have been speaking was another writer who, at the Queen's accession, had reached the very zenith of his literary power,—we would say of his fame also, if that word could be fitly applied to one who, while he excited unbounded admiration among a small circle, was never clearly discerned by the outer world. The great and varied talents of Walter Savage Landor must entitle him to a high place in literature, but it is extremely difficult to select the place which should be allotted to him, both from the singularity of his genius, and also from the fact that during the whole sixty-five years of his indefatigable literary career, we hardly come upon one work of his which may be regarded as entering into competition with any other production of the day. In fact, except in a few cases of publications devoted to some emergency of the moment, such as the address to the Italian people on "Representative Government," Landor wrote rather for himself than for any audience. That there would be a select few by whom his writings would be ardently welcomed, Landor hoped and believed, but that they should

be appreciated by the world at large he neither expected nor desired. The common herd—that is, not the lower classes, dignified by Mr. Gladstone with the title of “masses,” but the everyday world, Brown, Jones and Robinson, the passers-by in the street or the men at the club—were regarded in his mind with indifference or disgust. We find ample evidence of this feeling in his dialogues; Barrow speaks with horror and contempt of popularity, Anaxagoras bids Aspasia remember that he lived and died apart from other men. It is a narrow view to take at best, and a very mischievous doctrine when it finds disciples, for every generation sees thousands of its young men impelled by the sheer delusion that they are not as others to make much greater fools of themselves than Nature originally intended them to do. Nor is the world slow to accept a defiance of this kind. With a few exceptions of men of immense genius, he who neglects the approval of the world fails to command its attention. So it is that though Landor still has, and perhaps more now than formerly, a circle of admirers, who have a real appreciation of his genius,—augmented perhaps by some who think that to praise him is a mark of superior discernment,—to the world at large he remains an indistinct figure, and those who do not know him better than anybody else, know little more of him than his name.

Walter Savage Landor was born in 1775, of an old Staffordshire family, well descended also through his mother, one of the Savages of Tachbrook in Warwickshire. He was educated at Rugby, and Trinity College, Oxford, where he distinguished himself by his ability and scholarship, and by many pranks, harmless enough in themselves,—mere indications of the bold, masterful spirit, impatient of any kind of control, which he showed throughout life,—but which hardly commended themselves to those in authority. Few old Rugbeians would be scandalised at the story how, being detected by a farmer in the fascinating pursuit,—always popular at that venerable seat of learning,—of water-poaching, he threw his cast-net over his captor and held him captive in his turn. From Oxford he was sent down for having in a frolic fired a charge of shot into his neighbour's windows. Landor was then, as the undergraduates whispered to each other with a kind of awe, a red republican in politics; and his neighbour was a Tory, and was entertaining a party “consisting of servitors” (poor scholars) “and other raffs of every description,” whom this leveller regarded with the most aristocratic contempt. On leaving the university, Landor immediately rushed into print with his first volume of *Poems*, a collection of English and Latin pieces of little mark published in 1795. In the same

year also appeared a satirical *Moral Epistle* addressed to Lord Stanhope on the iniquities of Pitt. His next few years were chiefly occupied by poetical studies, quarrels with his family and flirtation, an amusement to which in his early days Landor was particularly addicted. In 1798 appeared his epic poem of *Gebir*, which attracted no attention at the time ; indeed, considering the trouble that Landor took to secure obscurity for it, publishing it anonymously in pamphlet form through a Warwick bookseller, it is surprising that it was ever heard of at all. Southey, however, praised it loudly both among his friends and in the *Critical Review*, and Shelley, Lamb and De Quincey were all among its admirers. It is certainly a remarkable production, the lines often majestic, the language and diction always refined, and the whole structure imposing ; but to our mind it is somewhat stiff and motionless, imparting rather a sense of fatigue to the reader, not from dulness, but severity. Disgusted at the failure of *Gebir*, Landor made an experiment in journalism, on the staff of the Foxite *Courier*, but it was not successful. The fact was he could not be trusted to run in harness ; as long as he was given his head, and allowed to denounce Pitt to his heart's content, all was well ; but when it was desired to guide him steadily along a particular political path, he became unmanageable. In 1800 he

published some *Poems from the Arabian and Persian*, and in 1802 a volume of *Poetry by the Author of Gebir*, containing the fine poem of Chrysaor, perhaps the greatest of his efforts in heroic verse.

On his father's death in 1805, Landor found himself master of a considerable fortune. He now settled for some time at Bath, where he went much into society,—where his great natural gifts of mind and person made him generally welcome, his notorious republican views perhaps adding a little piquancy to his popularity,—bought many bad pictures, as was his wont, and otherwise fulfilled the duties of a gentleman of property. In 1808 a sudden start of enthusiasm sent him off to Spain,—then just preparing to resist the unwarrantable invasion of Napoleon,—where he raised and equipped a thousand volunteers at his own cost, marched them to the front, and would probably have done good service, had he not been hampered by the incapacity of the Spanish commander, Blake. On his return to England, he purchased at enormous expense—selling for the purpose his Staffordshire estate and his mother's inheritance of Tachbrook—a large property at Llanthony in South Wales, where he proposed to spend a happy and useful life as a country gentleman, improving the condition of the land and of the people, planting trees,—his favourite occupation next to buying pictures,—

and disseminating virtue and prosperity generally over the landscape. To increase his happiness, he married, with his usual impetuosity, a Miss Thuillier, daughter of a Swiss banker at Banbury, a pretty, frivolous girl who caught his fancy at a dance. His projects scarcely turned out successful; in two or three years he had managed to quarrel with the Bishop of the diocese, the Lord-Lieutenant of the county, his brother country gentlemen who sat with him on the grand jury, and, most fiercely of all, with his own tenantry. Nor were his domestic relations any happier. His wife had no sympathy with his tastes and disliked the solitude of Llanthony. Vexatious lawsuits were brought against him by his tenants, and local attorneys set upon the rash, impetuous gentleman as their natural prey. Some of these he satirised in Latin verses, others he thrashed and had to pay them damages. Utterly disheartened and disgusted with mankind, almost ruined in fortune and separated even from his wife, he retired in 1814 to France to begin a long residence abroad.

In 1812 he had published his tragedy of *Count Julian*, a work marked by most of the same qualities and defects as are found in *Gebir*. The style is more mature, and the versification perhaps more agreeable, but the characters, though they now speak for themselves, are stiffer than

before ; they seem fitter for the Greek stage, to attain artificial stature on a buskin and intone through the *porte-voix* of a tragic mask the majestic lines assigned to them, than for modern English. There are, however, some beautiful bits of description, inspired by Landor's own Spanish experiences, from one of which we venture to quote a few lines—

If strength be wanted for security,
Mountains the guard, forbidding all approach
With iron-pointed and uplifted gates,
Thou wilt be welcome too in Aguilar,
Impenetrable, marble-turreted,
Surveying from aloft the limpid ford,
The massive fane, the sylvan avenue ;
Whose hospitality I proved myself,
A willing leader in no impious war
When fame and freedom urged me ; or may'st dwell
In Reñosa's dry and thriftless dale,
Unharvested beneath October moons,
Among those frank and cordial villagers.

In the same year appeared his singular *Commentary on Memoirs of Mr. Fox*, and in the next, his *Idyllia* and other Latin poems privately printed at Oxford, the profits, if any, to go to the suffering poor of Leipzig. It was a favourite idea of Landor's to devote the profits of his publications to some charitable purpose ; unfortunately there never were any profits.

From France, where his wife and his brother

Robert joined him after a while, Landor wandered on into Italy, to Como first and then to Pisa, and finally to Florence, where he remained for a great part of his life. In 1820 appeared his *Idyllia Heroica*, a revised and enlarged edition of the *Idyllia* mentioned above, most of which he afterwards turned into English and republished in his *Hellenics* many years later. With his residence at Florence began in 1821 that series of *Imaginary Conversations* which is generally recognised as Landor's greatest title to fame. His extensive reading and his powerful imagination combined to enable him to put his characters upon the scene with wonderful vividness and power. These are no longer the carved stone figures of his poems, but living and breathing men and women, perhaps a little too conscious that they are speaking before an audience and therefore inclined to be sententious, but full of life and individuality. It is to be regretted also that, except in a few cases,—the dialogue between Horne Tooke and Johnson is a happy exception,—they will not argue; one character says his say and then another, but there is rarely a marked continuity of thought connecting the various speeches of one man. The prose in which they speak is remarkable for its refinement and perhaps almost too classical purity. It is hard to select any that are worthy of preference,

as each reader will naturally have his own favourites; we own, however, to thinking that Landor has been most successful with the dialogues of antiquity, perhaps because the characters in these lend themselves most easily to the manner of treatment. The discussion of Demosthenes by his rival Æschines and Phocion, Diogenes bantering Plato, Cicero and his brother Quintus moralising on life and death and immortality seem to us to be among the very finest specimens. We should not give so high a place to Landor's own favourite, the scene between Epicurus and his girl-pupils, Leontion and Ternissa, and we own to being fatigued by the letters of Pericles and Aspasia and their friends which made their appearance after the *Conversations* in a separate work in two volumes; but we certainly think that the classical atmosphere is that best conveyed by so stately a vehicle as Landor's prose. Yet he has hardly ever excelled the dialogue of Leofric and Godiva, and a great measure of praise is due to that in which General Kleber opens the locket of the murdered English officer, and to many others of the more modern scenes. Again the *Pentameron*, a series of dialogues between Petrarch and Boccaccio, contains much fine writing and some exquisite criticism, though the latter is at times too minute, and the two great Italians show less

respect for their mighty precursor, Dante, than is either natural in them or judicious in Landor. In each and all of his prose writings we find the same choice language and classical diction and, in more varying degree, the same lofty thoughts. There is one passage which recurs to us as we write, from one of his minor works, which is a striking example of a noble thought expressed in worthy language. He is speaking of image worship among the Irish.

They have been, and ever must be, idolaters. Do not let their good clergy be angry with me for the expression. I mean no harm by it. Firmly do I believe that the Almighty is too merciful and too wise for anger or displeasure at it. Would one of these kind-hearted priests be surly at being taken for another? Certainly not : and quite as certainly the Maker of mankind will graciously accept their gratitude, whether the offering be laid in the temple or the turf, whether in the enthusiasm of the heart, before a beautiful image, expressing love and benignity, or, without any visible object, in the bleak and desert air.

Many will feel with the writer of this beautiful passage, who would hardly have dared to have put their feeling into words. But to Landor hesitation in expressing his opinions was unknown ; strength and fearlessness were the principal characteristics of his nature and the most strongly reflected in his writings. He answered, indeed, in mind as in body, to the description given by a contemporary of James I. of Scotland,

“a man right manly strong.” And if we say that his open defiance of the world’s opinion has caused his works to be merely laid aside by the great multitude of readers, we do not deny his power to compel the admiration of the critic who does venture upon them.

The first series of the *Imaginary Conversations* appeared in 1824, with a supplementary volume four years later,—the second in 1829; other dialogues were added at later periods. The *Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare*, a work of imagination containing some passages of genuine humour, which was not usually Landor’s strong point, was published in 1834, *Pericles and Aspasia* two years later, and the *Pentameron* in 1837. We have been, the reader may think, a long time in arriving at this date, with which we ought to have begun; but Landor’s life stretches almost as far beyond as before the proper beginning of this record. These, however, form his principal prose works. In later life he devoted himself more to poetry again. In 1839 he commenced his dramatic trilogy on the story of Queen Joan of Naples, the last play of the series, *Fra Rupert*, appearing in 1841. In 1846 he formed a collected edition of his works, in which appeared for the first time his *Hellenics*, a series of poems on classical subjects, which, in our opinion, have received much higher praise than was their due.

In 1853 appeared a new batch of "Conversations" under the title of the *Last Fruit off an Old Tree*. Would that it had been indeed his last work! for an injudicious publication entitled *Dry Sticks* five years later involved him in a libel suit, the consequences of which threw a shadow over his later life. Many of his smaller poems were written in his latter years. Opinions differ greatly as to the quality of Landor's minor verse, in which the standard of excellence, reached by some of his works, appears to be but imperfectly maintained. We have found none sweeter among his shorter poems than one of an earlier period, the consolation addressed to Mary Lamb on her brother's death, which we will venture to quote as little known to the general reader.

Comfort thee, O thou mourner, yet awhile !
 Again shall Elia's smile
 Refresh thy heart, where heart can ache no more.
 What is it we deplore ?

He leaves behind him, freed from griefs and years,
 Far worthier things than tears.
 The love of friends without a single foe ;
 Unequalled lot below !

His gentle soul, his genius, these are thine ;
 For these dost thou repine ?
 He may have left the lowly walks of men ;
 Left them he has ; what then ?

Are not his footsteps followed by the eyes
Of all the good and wise ?
Tho' the warm day is over, yet they seek
Upon the lofty peak

Of his pure mind the roseate light that glows
O'er death's perennial snows.
Behold him ! from the regions of the blest
He speaks : he bids thee rest.

Landor's last production, the *Heroic Idylls*, appeared in 1863, sixty-eight years after the publication of the first *Poems of Walter Savage Landor*. He died in 1864 at the age of eighty-nine. Some months before his death the old man, who, in the days when he was a clever schoolboy, may have heard with interest of the publication of Cowper's *Translations from Homer*, awoke from the lethargy that was creeping over him to welcome a visit from the newest young English poet, Mr. Swinburne.

The writer whose name, mainly for chronological reasons, we have coupled with Landor's, was of a very different strain. Strength, as we have said, of body and mind, of will and character, was the prominent attribute of Landor ; while it would not be too harsh to say that Leigh Hunt's character was chiefly influenced by feebleness of mind and body. His faults and his good qualities alike were those of a weaker organisation ; the petty meannesses, the enduring spite, the

unwillingness or incapacity to take a high view even of friends and benefactors, as much as the light-heartedness and frivolity, the almost feminine grace and charm, belong alike to one who looked upon his stronger fellow-creatures as in some sort his natural protectors, endued with a special mission to watch over his delicate existence, deserving only casual thanks when they did what was but their manifest duty, and of bitter and spiteful satire when they attended to their own affairs instead. James Henry Leigh Hunt was born at Southgate in 1784, of a West Indian family, his father being a loyal American lawyer who had come over to England when the Rebellion broke out, and who became a preacher at a chapel in Paddington, and afterwards tutor to the Hon. James Henry Leigh, from whom his son got his many names. Leigh Hunt was educated at Christ's Hospital, the school of Coleridge and Charles Lamb, and began at an early age to write verse, a volume of which, called *Juvenilia*, his father had published by subscription, when the poet was barely seventeen. They had some success, and the young author continued to scribble industriously, while pretending to work at law, and having shortly after obtained a clerkship in the War Office, threw that up also to pursue his natural trade of literature, a taste shared by a brother, John, with whom he founded

one of the first of literary papers, the *Examiner*. This daring and clever journal, however, soon got into hot water: an article on military floggings brought the Hunts the advertisement of a prosecution, from which they came off with flying colours, owing to Brougham's advocacy. In 1812 an adulatory article in the *Morning Post* with regard to the Prince of Wales stirred the bile of the waspish little *Examiner*, which took upon itself to describe to its readers what "this delightful, blissful, wise, honourable, virtuous, true, and immortal prince" was in reality. The statement might be powerfully and potently believed by all men, but the Government naturally held it not honesty that it should be thus set down; and the Hunts were prosecuted for libel and sentenced to two years' imprisonment apiece and a fine of £500.

Leigh Hunt was in no wise dismayed by his sentence; he was well treated and had a pleasant room, where his wife and his friends were allowed to visit him, and he continued to edit the *Examiner* just as well in prison as out of it. In 1815 he published his *Descent of Liberty*, a poem on Napoleon's downfall, and also reprinted the *Feast of Poets*, contributed some years before to the *Reflector*, an abortive magazine started in 1810 by his speculative brother John. In 1816 followed one of his daintiest and most graceful productions,

his poem on the story of Paolo and Francesca, called the *Story of Rimini*. He was at this time enjoying the friendship of Byron, Shelley, Keats and Moore, and many other leading writers, of most of whom he found some opportunity to say an evil word afterwards. Meanwhile he defended them in the *Examiner*, and when *Blackwood* or the *Quarterly* attacked himself, was convinced that it must really be one of his friends who was being struck at through him. He certainly did not gain much by their friendship, though Shelley, with his usual generosity, lent him a large sum of money to tide over his difficulties at one period. In 1821 he was induced to join Byron and Shelley in Italy in order to make final arrangements about a new quarterly, to be called the *Liberal*. The catastrophe which was the end of Shelley's life happened almost as soon as he had reached Pisa, and Byron's interest in the venture never seems to have been a keen one. The magazine appeared, however, the first number containing Byron's "Vision of Judgment"; but in spite of all Hunt's exertions to keep it going, did not survive beyond the fourth issue. Byron and Hunt were equally bitter in attributing to each other the blame of this fiasco, each trying to saddle the other with the original responsibility of the undertaking.

Hunt also started various other periodicals

at different times, the *Indicator* from 1819 to 1821, the *Tatler*, 1830-32, and the *London Journal*, 1834-35. In 1840 he produced a five-act play called a *Legend of Florence* at Covent Garden Theatre, where it had a great success, among its warmest admirers being Her Majesty, who insisted on having it specially performed at Windsor. He was at the same time writing biographies of Wycherley, Congreve and other dramatists, to serve as introductions to editions of their works published by Moxon, a piece of work which he did exceedingly well. The remaining years of his life were occupied in various kinds of book-making, selections from English and foreign literature and the like, all charmingly executed but of no particular importance. Among the best known are the *Jar of Honey from Mount Hybla*, a work of Sicilian history, poetry and legends published in 1848, and a series of sketches of London called *The Town; Its Memorable Characters and Events* (1848), afterwards supplemented by the *Old Court Suburb; or Memorials of Kensington* (1855). He died in 1859 at the age of seventy-five.

It is not easy to decide what place in literature should be assigned to Leigh Hunt, but we certainly think that he has generally been ranked much too high, owing in great part to

the factitious importance attaching to him as the friend of Byron and Shelley. The great bulk of his work is merely that of an agreeable *littérateur*, possessed of much fluency and ease in writing and a peculiarly graceful turn of expression. Of his poems, the *Story of Rimini*, which we should rank among the highest, is full of charming poetical conceits, such as the picture of that scene where—

April with his white hands wet with flowers,
Dazzles the bridesmaids looking from the towers :
Green vineyards and fair orchards, far and near,
Glitter with drops ; and heaven is sapphire clear,
And the lark rings it, and the pine-trees glow,
And odours from the citrons come and go ;
And all the landscape—earth and sky and sea—
Breathes like a bright-eyed face that laughs out openly.

But the whole composition lacks depth ; it is charming upon the surface, but there is nothing to be found below. This quality of shallowness, which we regard as attaching more or less to almost all of Leigh Hunt's work, is naturally most observable in his poetry ; yet that there was something deeper and higher in the strange little man, with his half-childish, half-womanish charm, is shown by one or two gems which would make up for a great deal of lightness and superficiality. The well-known verses to his child during a sickness are sufficient evidence

of what he could write when deeply moved, but a more perfect specimen of the true, poetic sympathy with noble thoughts not necessarily brought home to him by actual experience is given in the little poem of "Abou Ben Adhem," which we quote, well known as it is, to demonstrate the potential greatness of a man who, in our judgment, achieved but little.

Abou Ben Adhem—may his tribe increase—
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold.
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?" The vision raised his head,
And with a voice made of all sweet accord,
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."
"And is mine one?" said Adhem. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the Angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still and said, "I pray thee then
Write me as one who loves his fellow-men."
The Angel wrote and vanished. The next night
He came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blest,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

Before these noble lines the voice of criticism is silent. This is not the poetry that a man can make out of his own head, but that which can only come from the true spirit working within him. Doubtless there was much good

in Leigh Hunt ; he was the close friend of Carlyle and of many others whose friendship was in itself a mark of honour and of merit. His life was in many ways a hard one ; debt, deception and disappointment were the companions of many a time when he kept a contented, smiling face to the outer world. His faults, at least, he made no attempt to hide, and the love that he gained was in spite of the knowledge of them. We may hope that his name too may be found in the angel's list, for surely no unloving heart could have given birth to so lofty a conception.

CHAPTER III

OF THOMAS CARLYLE, JOHN STUART MILL,
AND OTHER ESSAYISTS AND CRITICS

IN the midst of all these interesting and important but lesser men, there now rose up somewhat suddenly into knowledge and a curiously modified and conditional fame, the greatest writer of his generation, the ever-memorable, much misunderstood, mightily misrepresented, but always noble and picturesque figure of Thomas Carlyle. He was born in 1794 in the village of Ecclefechan among the green hills and many traditions of Annandale, of an upright and remarkable family of peasant-farmers, as worthy a stock as any primitive country has ever produced, with an intelligence and intellectual capacity much beyond any expectation, combined with those strong features of character both for good and evil which were native to the soil. They were an upright, conscientious,

God-fearing race, somewhat stern in religion, with a strong strain of the Old Testament in their piety; full of an exclusiveness more tremendous than any instinct of aristocracy, and a curious suspiciousness of other races and developments of men, from which their great descendant never by any amount of experience or adulation from the world could shake himself free: people who loved each other, and clung to every relationship (though not without much freedom of caustic criticism between themselves) with an intensity and force unsurpassed; but were always dubious of other people, never certain of the good meaning of those outside their circle, though very confident of their own. These peculiarities which were common to their country and kind have rarely been so strongly manifested to the world as by this rural family which has come to such unusual notice and comment in the world, chiefly, as is unfortunate, by means of interpreters unacquainted by nature with the wide extension and characteristic meaning of their qualities. Carlyle was educated, as was his friend and contemporary, Edward Irving, at the Annan Grammar School, where he himself, in a very brilliant passage, recorded long after the return of that wonderful boy in the midst of his University career, dazzling and inspiring other schoolboys of Annan. The little

town and obscure school were thus made visible, as it were, in a blaze of light to the bigger world of Britain and all English-speaking people, as the cradle of two men destined to affect in the strongest degree the life and literature of the Empire.

Carlyle proceeded from thence to the University of Edinburgh, where his chief distinction seems to have been in mathematics. He was without influence, friends, or any desire to make them, a rugged, somewhat repellent, defiant young man, fearing, as the very devil himself, any attempt at patronage, yet entertaining from the beginning a determination to make himself famous. His youth, though poor enough and accompanied by many struggles of the mind and thoughts, as well as a poverty which to many might have been abject, but to him was but the spare and self-denying ordinary of life—was not without success. When he left college he became a schoolmaster for a time, first at Annan, afterwards at Kirkcaldy, and was always able to maintain himself, the first essential to a young man in his position ; nor was he ever without friends. In the year 1822, at the age of twenty-seven, he entered the Buller family as tutor, under circumstances so unlike those of the usual tutor of literature that we can only wonder at his conquest so early of all the supposed disagreeables of a dependent life. He attained this exceptional position by the recommendation

of Edward Irving, and by the remarkable penetration and insight of a family which he learned to like almost in spite of himself, and in which he became acquainted, as few Scotch student-tutors do, with the life of a class which may be called the highest in English society. And though his success was more slow than his friends' proud hopes had expected, he attained, even before his full maturity, to a reputation which went on increasing, notwithstanding that he never could be anything but caviare to the general, until he reached the highest pinnacle of fame, and became the undoubted first of writers in his age. His struggles with his health, with his temper, with the sensitive and high-strung nature which was the great drawback of his genius, were sometimes tragical, often whimsical, sometimes laughable. They were taken as such struggles had best be, by a wife extraordinarily suited to him, with the mingled sympathy, impatience, mockery, respect and banter which were natural to her keen wit and thorough understanding of the man with whom she had to deal: but have been taken by his biographers and commentators *au grand sérieux*, as if every one of his half-conscious exaggerations were real, and the life which was on the whole a noble and noteworthy life, full of many enjoyments and successes, had been one of almost uninterrupted gloom and wretchedness.

This false view of two great and remarkable persons—for Mrs. Carlyle, though in many respects voluntarily effacing herself in her husband's greater light, was as unusual an apparition in the routine of ordinary life, and almost as original in character and genius as himself—is too strongly rooted in the minds of the general reader ever to be altered now ; and every differing estimate of their being must come in as a protest, a remonstrance against a settled conclusion. We will not therefore lose time in the attempt to convey a different opinion to the public mind. Carlyle enjoyed for many years the homage of his country, universally acknowledged as one of its greatest men, loved by many, and proving to many the possession of a heart full of kindness and generosity as well as of great and extraordinary genius. No man ever left this world more full of honours, more completely possessed of the respect, veneration and proud recognition of his countrymen : but within a year or two after his death his reputation had been torn to rags, and thrown to the dogs, at the mercy of every dirty cur in England. Not that the records of his life had revealed one evil action, one act of treachery, dishonesty or bad faith, but solely because of the artificial sense given to his most private sentiments and domesticities, and the betrayal of those half ravings of stormy and remorseful grief in which the gentlest spirit sympathises

with the most violent, in self-reproach for its behaviour towards the lost companions of life—a mental malady as well known and universal as grief itself. Such an overturn of popular sentiment has never, we believe, been known in literary history, nor in our own opinion any one so undeserved. The faithful and tender companion of Carlyle's life, she who had valiantly stood between him and every annoyance for more than forty years of union, broken by nothing but an occasional strain of feeling, the little resentments and contrarieties of life, which arise sometimes between the mildest of pairs, and could not but exist between two so individual, so original, so independent, keen-witted and outspoken—this most loyal wife and trusted friend was disinterred out of her grave to bear witness against him. We repeat that such an act of iconoclasm, of personal unfaith—and not least, of misunderstanding, was never done before.

Carlyle's literary life began by his translation of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* and by his *Life of Schiller*—the first a translation of a remarkable kind, with a flavour of German still in the English, but not of that ignorant sort which stamps imperfect knowledge, rather the characteristic tone which keeps the reader in pleased remembrance of the spirit of a foreign tongue; the latter an admirable biography, full of insight and knowledge.

The *Schiller*, which was intended to be one of a series of "Portraits of Men of Genius and Character," was first published in the *London Magazine*. *Meister*, for which he received a good price—£180 for the first edition, the translation of a book as yet unknown to the English public, by a young man totally unknown to it, was certainly excellent pay—was published in the beginning of 1824, the *Schiller* in the end of that year. Both were favourably if not enthusiastically received. In one instance indeed, and that a most gratifying one, the latter word might almost be applied to Goethe's appreciation of both books, modestly sent to him by the as yet unknown writer, of whom he prophesied that he "should yet hear much."

Carlyle left the Bullers in the year 1824, in order to devote himself to literary work: and in 1826, after a somewhat stormy courtship, married Jane Welsh, the daughter of Dr. Welsh of Haddington, a popular and successful country practitioner, perhaps the only woman in the world who rightly understood and could fully have mated him. Detached from intolerable commentaries and explanations—the interpretation by a mind wholly formed and trained in another *milieu*, and imbued with all the prejudices of a totally different life—the correspondence of the new pair, as it will be found in the *Life*, is wholly delightful, full

of love, sympathy and brightness. They were undoubtedly a strange pair: she born sarcastic, unable to refrain from throwing dazzling darts of mischief, ridicule, keen wit all about her, incapable at any time of avoiding or not perceiving the ridiculous side of all affairs; he, accustomed to exaggerate all his dyspeptic and other troubles, and *not* capable of putting on paper the great volcanic outburst of laughter that generally swept his complaints and grumblings away. Curiously enough, the portion of their early life which was spent in Edinburgh—in Comely Bank, an idyllic title for the dwelling of such a pair—was passed without much apparent contact with the brilliant society then existing there: which must, one supposes, have been Carlyle's fault, though with all his girdings at society he was as little able to do without the fellowship of his kind as any man ever was, and as a matter of fact had many and attached friends everywhere. He did not care for Wilson, or Wilson was, "for some reason, shy of him"—why, one cannot tell. He never was popular indeed with the clan of *Blackwood* for some untold cause, therefore there must probably have been some offence given or taken, perhaps unconsciously. It is scarcely possible to think of any fellowship between him and De Quincey, yet he had a kindly admiration for the opium-eater. On the other hand Jeffrey, the clear-headed,

vivacious, generous soul and head of the other camp, had no sooner seen this shy and rustic man, always prone, we may be sure, to exaggerate his homeliness of manner when he came in contact with the polite circles of literature—than he perceived what was in him, and heartily adopted into his friendship both man and wife, Mrs. Carlyle attracting him at once to an enthusiasm of friendship, though only after his keen and bright perceptions had divined and understood the greater figure by her side. Unfortunately this did not occur till the end of their life in Edinburgh, when all was already arranged for the transfer of their household gods to the moors of Dumfriesshire. Their intercourse resulted immediately, however, in work, which was the thing Carlyle wanted most, work which he could satisfy himself was not merely the composition of those “articles” which seemed to him a selling of the soul to mammon in Hazlitt and De Quincey. His miscellaneous essays, chiefly on the subject of German literature—and the first revelation of that literature to many—were the immediate issue of his connection with Jeffrey; essays written before his style had acquired those thunderous qualities which afterwards made it so attractive to some, so repellent to others. Vigorous English, with a few idioms and turns of phrase caught now from native Scotch, now from the loved Teutonic, were

these narratives and criticisms. To those who never acquired a taste for the vast-flowing Solway-flood of that style by which he was distinguished in after-life, and in which his greatest works were written, these six volumes of essays still give assurance of a noble writer above the need of any eccentricity in word or work.

Had these essays been written, and his connection with so important and imposing a literary enterprise as the *Edinburgh Review* begun a year sooner, it is possible that the life in Edinburgh might have been prolonged and might have been more satisfactory: but these are speculations which are not admissible in human affairs. He was on the eve of leaving for his wife's little moorland house of Craigenputtock when Jeffrey first appeared on his horizon. There, with occasional breaks—a six months in London which brought the pair into a society which fully appreciated them—or rather it is more true to say into the frequent company of a few equals and disciples who more or less spoke their own language, and understood what they meant to be at—they remained for six years, from 1828 to 1834. This has been supposed one long period of agony in Mrs. Carlyle's life, during which she laboured and suffered in utter loneliness and menial toil, and sowed the seeds of ailment both physical and mental. As a matter of fact the

life was one by no means unusual or unparalleled at the time or in her position. She gave a thousand picturesque, sarcastic, thrilling accounts of it, often in fun, often in a comic despair, sometimes in real discouragement and profound weariness, such as is apt to overcome every one, whatever the speciality of their labours may be. But she was not, which is the impression of her husband's biographer, a duke's daughter, a fine lady utterly unacquainted with domestic cares and toil. She had to do many things with her own hands, as the mistress of a small household imperfectly served by a maid-of-all-work generally has to do. Such a fate contained nothing extraordinary for a country doctor's daughter. She might have made a better match: still, such a match must have been always on the cards for her. Among her contemporaries many no doubt did no better. Had she married Edward Irving, as it is said (but we think mistakenly) she at one time wished to do, she would have had a very similar fate, except in so far that the Scotch minister's humble house in Pentonville would have been less, not more, suitable to her than her own bare little ancestral lodge on the moor. Much that is unutterably foolish has been written on this subject—void of all understanding, as the conceptions of critics born in another sphere and of a different generation are apt to be, however able and powerful

may be the minds that are brought to bear upon matters too high or too low for them. The letters of this period if taken without comment convey one of the most delightful pictures of mutual love and tenderness. The caressing affection of their tone, the deep sense on Carlyle's part that without his Goody he is an incomplete man, the fond family jests and banter, are to ourselves a full exposition of the terms on which the pair stood which no able editor can obscure—though, the circumstances being as little understood by the majority of his readers as by himself, and the story being made much more piquant by the light thus imported into it, the able editor in this case has succeeded in obscuring and throwing dust in the eyes of the too credulous and indiscriminating multitude.

However, the present narrative ought to be confined to the literary life of Carlyle, though it is almost impossible to pass by the view authoritatively given of his moral and social circumstances without comment. The years he passed at Craigenputtock or Craig o' Putta, as it is frequently called in the letters, was the true period of incubation for Carlyle's genius, and laid the foundation of all his future work and fame. Here his beliefs, such as they were, took form and established themselves. What they finally came to be, it is difficult to tell, even after all the expositions given by his biographer and by other

authorities. Mr. Froude describes the revolution in his thoughts by the emblem of Galileo's discovery that the sun did not revolve round the earth, but the earth round the sun, making plain the fact that our world was no longer the centre of a system made for its convenience, but only an atom in the vast universe. We are obliged to say that no light to speak of is thrown to ourselves upon Carlyle's creed by this simile, though it is no doubt a fine one, and indeed originally used by himself in those interpretations which are generally but fresh whirlings and blasts of cloud, and contain no precise light whatever. There is no reason to suppose that he meant any light to be precise. His mission was to show to the world the cloud wrappings, the strange delusive vapours, the deep abysses of mystery in which our little tangible life floats, surrounded on every side by bewildering darkness, and wonders which no man can clear up. To those who saw in it a clear, comfortable, solid universe enough, the best of all possible worlds, in which man's chief end was to attain comfort and respectability, he was a great destructive, pulling down every foundation and leaving the unhappy soul weltering in mists and marshes of the Unknowable.

And yet in all his scorn of the things that be, in all his wild expositions of that "stuff that dreams are made of," in all his indignant denunciations of

sham and false appearances, he held fast to the great initial idea of God and providence, a Being before whom every man should answer for his deeds, a divine and miraculous system in which, at the last, everlasting Justice should be found supreme. This was the only thing he was sure of: but of it he was sure as that he lived. The mists and tempests that whirled about his head, the wild quagmires which he felt to spread around him, the rolling billows of cloud which shut out, except in glimpses, all natural shining, never blurred for him the consciousness of one eye that penetrated all, the certainty of that power which is beyond and above all the contentions of earth. That the world was a place for a man to make his way in, to make his fortune, to attain comfort and reputation by steady climbing, catching at every twig to help himself up, was the famous gospel of Respectability which he felt himself bound to trample under foot. And it is true that he had no other gospel to proclaim. That was not his business. In his mind there was perhaps little hope of any: sometimes when excited by the sight of what he considered sham religion he was wildly and contemptuously profane: often when in presence of real piety and devotion, tenderly reverent and respectful. But his faith was this only—the faith of a man conscious of God everywhere, God undeniable, all-pervading, whose ways were

righteous, and whose service was the only use of man. This was much. On other matters he pronounced according to his feelings and moods, often those of the moment only: on this he stood as on a rock. The world to him was full of the wildest phantasmagoria, puniest atoms of living creatures playing such pranks before high heaven, performing all injustices, cruelties, intolerable perversities, storming out their little day of contradiction and blasphemy. But over all there was God looking on, permitting the wild tempest to work itself out, keeping ever, through all seeming impossibility, the reins in His own hand. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision,"—most terrible words of any in Holy Writ—might have been the text upon which Carlyle's work was founded.

And yet we think amid all his consciousness of supreme thought and a tempestuous power of intellect, and all the drawbacks of gloomy and arrogant nature with which he is credited, Carlyle was always, both as a man and a writer, subject to his heart and feelings in a way which few have been. The veriest sham and impostor denounced in burning words, once brought into contact with him, showing another, personal side, the real side of nature, became at once a man and a brother. Against no voice out of a human heart could his heart steel itself. Fire and flame, and the bellowing

as of a volcano in labour, for the abstract, the general : for the individual once actually brought before him, instant perception of those gleams of humanity, those underlights of truth which are to be perceived in most men by the eye that can see. Coming into a London drawing-room with his intense peasant suspiciousness and distrust of his fellow-men, with his equally intense peasant expectation that here at last might be found the society of the imagination, the brilliant talk and lofty thought which he had dreamed of from the earliest musings and eager hopes conceived in his father's barn-yard or among the beasts on the Annandale farm—he turned away with disgust and a silent anathema, finding it all empty talk, and foolish rivalry : but once seduced into a corner with—it scarcely mattered whom,—looking into a pair of unaffected human eyes, brought to bay and to conversation, the abstract opposition, so fiery, so bitter, so almost vindictive in dislike and disappointment, floated in a moment away : and the man he spoke to became tolerable, if not lovable, no thing at all to be denounced, but a fellow-creature, perhaps a friend. “ Rather liked the man, and shall like to see him again,” he says on one occasion, in respect to a man against whom he had a prejudice ; and so it happened constantly. Scarcely a better illustration could be given of this innate reasonableness and tenderness than

the way in which Leigh Hunt was treated by Carlyle, supposed essence of all that was rude, violent and intolerant, and Dickens, the sentimental optimist, full of gushing brotherhood and geniality. The rugged Scotch philosopher who hated everything that was unreal, could not discredit or push from him the kindly neighbour, whose weakness indeed he gradually perceived, but never stigmatised with any cruel word. The gushing and genial novelist made of him one of the most remorseless sketches ever drawn, impaling his friend on the sharpest stake of criticism to the laughter and enjoyment of the public. Carlyle was capable of a sweep of wrath over the heads of his company, devoting it in general to the infernal gods: but never of such an act towards an individual as this.

The chief outcome of the life at Craigenputtock was "*Sartor Resartus*," the great text-book and Shibboleth by which the true Carlyle-lover is to be proved at all times. It was—amid all the "articles" which kept the family going, and which by that time had developed from "*Essays on German Literature*" to such a tremendous chapter of history as the "*Diamond Necklace*," the first real revelation of the new force in literature—there that this book was produced. Its strange philosophy, its stranger tumultuous volcanic style, its extraordinary stamp of a burning earnestness and meaning

which were incomprehensible to the multitude, stupefying instead of exciting the reader—came out in the last form which was likely to do them justice—in successive instalments in *Fraser's Magazine* during the year 1833. And we can but honour the daring publisher who ventured to place it there, and to pay solid money for it, after its rejection by all the great firms, who returned it one after another with dumb amaze, to the dogged resignation of the author, whose determination, one time or another, to bring out "Dreck," as the unfortunate manuscript was called in the family, and force him upon the stupid race which had not discernment enough to see what was in him, never faltered. That "Dreck" caught here and there a listening ear, and that even among those to whom much of the rhapsody and whirlwind was incomprehensible, there were a few landscapes, a few situations which could not be forgotten—there can be little doubt. The wonderful episode of childhood, the home scenes of Weissnichtwo (Kennaquhair, according to Sir Walter, in fact and the vernacular, Ecclefechan), standing for ever in ethereal light and soft visionary shadow :—the mountain path where the hero-philosopher sees love and happiness sweep past him in the carriage that bears Blumine and her lover across the Alps—were not to be passed lightly by : but the book itself was like the story of the *Ancient*

Mariner, a thing to be delivered into the ear of the man whom the poet could discern as he passed to be the man who could hear, and whom no wedding feast or brave procession could deliver from that necessity. The public learned afterwards from the insistence of these predestined listeners, to receive with respect and a certain awe those wild vaticinations of the new prophet—but never heartily took to “Dreck”; though by means of its power of showing in the strongest form all the peculiarities and extravagances of its author, it was swept afterwards into the adoration of many who without much understanding always find the exaggerated gestures of the orator, the wildest tropes of the poet, most easy to mimic and to adore.

Life, however, was kept going at Craigenputtock with occasionally a bad moment—as when the household, with its numerous dependents, Brother John in London, Brother Archie in the farm, had but five pounds between them and ruin—a condition probably momentary, perhaps stated with a certain eye to the effect to be produced on these languid souls, not sufficiently determined to help themselves—until that solitude became intolerable, its uses being exhausted, and the great genius of its inhabitant sufficiently matured: and the pair finally after various hesitations came to London, where they settled in the month of February 1834, in that little well-known house

in Cheyne Row which they never left for any prolonged period again. A little old-fashioned house with dark panelled gleaming walls, so much of them as were not covered with books, where all that was best in England—as well as much that was far from the best, the natural drift of straw and hay and stubble which gets upon every living current—came and shone and talked: and where many a scene, half pathetic, half romantic, never without a ludicrous side, was recorded by the swift flashing pen, full of satire, fun and tears, of the house-historian, the Goody of early years, the brilliant tender woman whose nature it was to spread a veil of mockery over her warmest feelings, and hide with a gibe the “gush,” which was not to her Scotch kind and generation a permitted thing. Two scenes remain in the memory from the much recorded incidents of that life; the evenings in the firelight when the Sage sat and discoursed of his work to his wife lying on the sofa in the shadow, responding, keeping up the stream, yet sometimes wishing in her heart that he would remember her headache, and inquire into her domestic cares a little, and perhaps saying so to her next correspondent, to whom, in a hundred playful lights and shadows, she repeated the habitual scene, proud of the picture, though flinging her swift arrow through the chief figure in it, all the same. And there is

another which dwells in the personal recollection of the present writer, when both were old, when the wife opened the old-fashioned little square piano, the same no doubt that had been tuned to his delight and made music possible at Craigenputtock, and played to the tall old man in his gray dressing-gown, sitting meditative by the fire. A prettier, more touching scene could not be. She played to him—what? the reader may ask. Great strains of Handel or Beethoven, fit for angels to hear? Ah, no! Carlyle had no ear for the great masters, knew nothing of music, as people say. She played him the old tunes of his own countryside—the native music, often so rich in natural pathos, so soft in artless melody, so ringing and joyous in its accompaniment of rustic revel. Such scenes remain, along with many more evidences of absolute union: yet no doubt there were weepings and there were discords under that modest roof—moments of intense strain and even conflict, embittered by the fact that this pair had none of the common troubles of life to supply the sharp and pungent salt of common preoccupation to the common meal—no children coming and going, no sorrows to be borne together, no sons or daughters to be followed afar by anxieties and thoughts—but all concentrated as within the strait horizon of a pair of lovers, who must quarrel occasionally or die: of which unfortunate circumstance

much mischief, and a general fictitious representation falsely true, has been made and remains.

Carlyle's first work in London was the *History of the French Revolution*, which brings him after all these preliminaries into our special period. One of the first literary distinctions of Queen Victoria's reign was the publication of this book, which took place in the year of Her Majesty's accession, 1837. The perfection at once of that new grandiose yet rugged voice, which broke every law of composition and triumphed over them all, which shocked and bewildered all critics and authorities, yet excited and stirred the whole slumberous world of literature and rang into the air like a trumpet—and of a new manner altogether of regarding the events of history, making of them a great pictorial representation, all illuminated by the blaze, sometimes lurid, sometimes terrible, of the highest poetic genius and imagination, were fully displayed in this astonishing work. Histories enough of the French Revolution had been given to the world, and have been since—personal experiences, formal documents, fictitious narratives, all the collections of material possible, set forth in almost every setting that could be thought of—but none which conveyed the very sound and uproar of that wild orgie of the fates, none that showed the unhappy, confused workings of those blind guides and leaders, of those still

more blind opponents of the national frenzy, with such living force and power. If they are all perhaps too much like wild shadows running hither and thither against a background of flame and smoke and ever-blazing fire, that is the very bitterness of the truth with which the genius of Carlyle seized the reality of the most lamentable, the most awful, the most influential of recent epochs. It is no mere record but a great drama passing before our eyes. We are made spectators rather than readers of the terrible developments, one after another, of each successive act. A drama working blindly towards a *dénouement* of which its actors had neither conception nor intention, through which they wildly stalk, stumble, fall, each in his turn bringing renewed and unthought-of complications, new turns and twists of fate, as veritably happened, as happens continually: though to most generations there is no Seer to perceive how these strange new openings and closings succeed each other, and how the great thread of destiny rolls on.

It is a significant sign of the fact that he had already impressed himself, his character and philosophy upon something that could be called the public, that so early as this year Carlyle delivered a series of lectures which were tolerably well and profitably attended. From the beginning he had been recognised by everybody of

special ability or discrimination with whom he had been brought into contact—and he had scarcely more than appeared in London before he was surrounded with appreciation and friendship. His old friend Irving, who had done all that in him lay on Carlyle's first brief visit to London to extend his acquaintance and his fame, had by this time departed from the world of agitation and religious excitement, the troublous formation of a new sect, in which, though he was the greatest agent, he was far from being the leader—and Carlyle had entered, if not sympathetically, yet with grief and pity into the ending of that tragedy. But the stepping-stone of that early friendship had been for some time quite unnecessary to him. He began to be sought after everywhere, by great persons at home, and by pilgrims from beyond the seas. The best of his literary contemporaries in London—John Stuart Mill, the Austins, Monckton Milnes, afterwards Lord Houghton, always a true and steadfast friend, and many more, had appreciated him from the first and now circled about him. Notable foreigners, especially of the revolutionary kind, were brought to the little hospitable house, where such simple fare as there was was shared liberally with all who came. This society went on increasing till it included all that was distinguished in Great Britain : and in a wonderfully

short space of time the Annandale peasant-farmer, retaining in many ways the prejudices, and unaltered, the accent of his native district (the present writer never heard him, however, speak the "broad Scots" which is freely put into his mouth by witnesses perhaps less acquainted with it), became in his uncompromising individuality, conciliating nobody, the acknowledged head and most prominent figure in English literature. There can be little doubt that it was his *French Revolution* which turned the scale, a book more interesting than any romance, which those who took it up could not lay down, and which was far too impressive in its general character, too powerful and novel in its art to be mistaken or overlooked.

Carlyle was made President of the newly-founded London Library in 1839, a proof of the position accorded him by his peers: he had come to London comparatively unknown only five years before. In that year was published his essay on Chartism. In 1840 he delivered, and in 1841 published his *Heroes and Hero-Worship*: in 1845 the great work on Cromwell which at last fairly brought him within knowledge of the multitude and added to all previous and more precious fame, the applause, evidenced by a large sale, and complete success in a pecuniary point of view—of the crowd. This may be

considered as the climax of Carlyle's fame—which was always a fame full of contradictions, hotly discussed in every society, causing a ferment of almost personal feeling between those that were for and those that were against the great writer, who considered the prejudices of no one, and freely gave forth his own, with all the force of his great character and impassioned utterance. In 1849 his scornful, uncompromising treatment of the Nigger Question, made many hearts of his disciples quake, as did the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* published in 1850. His *Life of John Sterling* followed in 1851, in our opinion, with all the power and beauty of the sketch, an unfortunate book, as his friendship with that deeply impressionable and sadly destined young man was perhaps unfortunate too. What a man believes is his own: what is good in his creed may be enough for him, and for what is wrong in it he must himself bear the responsibility: but it is an overbold and terrible thing to interfere with the foundations of another, especially when the one who interferes is strong and above the tempests of life, while the other is weak and surrounded by all its trials and sorrows. We confess that to ourselves Carlyle is at his moral worst in this book. He sees his friend too much as he saw the heroes of the French Revolution, all round, against the bigger background which makes of

him but a drifting speck, blown here and there, of so little ultimate importance, his little passions and agonies so ephemeral, so mere a shadow in the great phantasmagoria of life. This is a treatment which is extraordinarily impressive in history, but which all human feeling cries out against in the case of a known man and friend.

When it was known that Carlyle had taken as his next subject the *History of Frederick the Great*, there was a commotion of expectation in the world which was not all agreeable. His future audience shook their heads over his choice of a subject. Frederick, he who annexed Silesia, he who had ridden red-shod over half Europe! It was hard enough to swallow Waterford and Derry, and his justification of their horrors, but how were we to take the German despot to our bosoms even at his bidding? This book cost him the strenuous labour of years. He sought his material far and wide always with the anxious help and furtherance of everybody at home or abroad who could be of service to him. For many years he and his household dwelt darkly in "the valley of the shadow of Frederick," as his wife said. At last the laborious work came to an end, the first two volumes being published in 1858, the later ones in 1862, 1864 and 1865. It was received with even more contradictory and mingled sentiments than *Cromwell*. Of that book there was much

criticism and many dissentients ; but the man at least was our own, and the stormy elucidations of his great career were of the deepest interest to his race. But Frederick was a foreign despot who had little in him to recommend him either to the heart or judgment. Carlyle's worship of strength and force, his love for the bold, the daring, for uncompromising action, and the tenacity which never loses hold of its object, were his inspiration in this extraordinary piece of history. He set Germany before us as he had set France, but not in that chaos of conflicting influences which had made all France shimmer and burn before our eyes. The German epic was not that of a nation but of one man. The book had an enormous popularity and success in the external way, as by this time everything had that came from his pen, but it had not the same exciting and inspiring power as those that went before.

In 1865 he was elected Lord Rector of Edinburgh University, and felt deeply the compliment thus paid him, with a pleasure which he would fain have hid under the old misanthropical pretences of indifference to the applause of the public—but could not, in the unaffected gratification it gave him. He went to Edinburgh, beyond all hope of his young constituency, to give them the habitual address. Alas! the journey was ill-starred. His wife had spent the time of that

trial and ordeal of the Speech which she had feared might be too much for him, in a restless anxiety and impatience to be with him, wonderings whether he would be properly cared for, breathless realisation of every step he was taking, which was more like the absorption of a lover, or of one of those mothers who live but in the life of a cherished child, than the sober sympathy of an elderly and, as supposed, disappointed wife. When she heard by telegram of the triumphant reception and success of his appearance in Edinburgh she began to breathe freely again: but she was by this time entirely shattered in health, a shadow of her former self, worn to attenuation, and so feeble that we well recollect our reluctance to leave her, to permit her to return home alone which she insisted upon doing, after a visit paid to the present writer. No doubt these anxieties had so fretted the slender thread of existence which, never strong, had now lasted for seventy years, that the simplest accident was enough to snap it asunder. This accident occurred a few days after, in the carriage in which she was taking her daily drive. And Carlyle came home to a desolate house, from which everything that made it home had departed for ever.

She had fretted that ending life out in anxieties for him—he lived the life that remained in a mourning for her which was so intense, so full of remorse and compunction as to be excessive and unjust to

himself. No one who has lost a dear companion but has suffered more or less from that malady. It is one which embitters the grief of the fondest and most faithful heart. We have never done enough, never loved enough those who have been the objects of our deepest affection, when the darkness closes over them and we can no longer explain, or ask pardon. Carlyle recollected every rough word, every ill-humour of his life as he sat mourning like a child in her deserted drawing-room. He magnified her until it seemed to the hearers as if she had been a princess stooping out of her state to him—and he, the clown, had never been grateful, never recompensed her, never seen all her sacrifice and condescension till now! From this fond superstition of the heart, the faithful old lover of Jeanie Welsh never recovered, but sat bemoaning himself and exalting her for the rest of the dim years of his life, sometimes in a rage of grief at himself and all who had not done her sufficient honour, sometimes uttering the most pathetic soft recollections of her youthful beauty and grace, elegies and mournful litanies in her praise, "There was none like her, none." The depth of this compunctious love was taken by at least one bystander for a real and matter-of-fact indictment by Carlyle of himself, a self-accusation of the bitterest kind. Such self-accusations come from those who have least cause to reproach themselves. In the depth

of his passionate grief the old man took up again that pen of his which had been as a flaming sword, full of lightnings and gleams of fire, and began to write wildly he knew not what, tracing his own life from its beginning, sometimes with the tenderest shadows and touches of that consoling imagination which by moments takes even despair out of itself, sometimes with hot reflections of the grief-passion turned to ire and fiery impatience with all around. This book, or collection of pictures of his life, in the stiller, dimmer, but calmer twilight which succeeded, he forgot that he had written—recollecting only that something was there which should not be printed without the most careful editing, or “better not at all.” One or two other brief outbursts, forebodings of political evil, full of something of the same despairing exaggeration came from him and were published in the following years: “Shooting Niagara” for one, the very burden of a prophet of evil, in 1867, and certain polemical defences of the conduct of Germany in the war, in 1870. He died in 1881, having survived, but never ceased to mourn, his wife for fifteen years.

He was no sooner dead, this great, universally honoured chief of literature in England, a man against whom no one had a word to say, to whom the nation itself amid all its huge businesses and interests gave a moment’s pause of regretful silence

to acknowledge his greatness, than the utterance of his fiery grief—the *Reminiscences* which had given outlet to his passion and misery, and of which he remembered only that they were to be anxiously revised or not published at all—was flung, just as it was, like a red-hot stone in the face of the country which mourned for Carlyle. In the *Chronicles of the Canon-gate* there is a terrible picture, too piteous, too miserable almost to bear, of the babbling wrath and irritation of the old man paralysed and broken, whose trembling daughter and faithful attendant try hard to conceal him in his wretchedness even from a sympathetic eye. The publication of the *Reminiscences* as they stand, was as if these devoted nurses had reported all the stammering vain passion of the sick man, the frenzy of his indignation when he was not understood. Carlyle was so much in a worse position, that even that irritability of grief, half wrought to madness, was instinct with genius, and that many beautiful things were thrown into the mass, molten together with the fiery lava stream that flowed between. The public caught breathless as was natural at this last legacy of the great spirit departed, this self-revelation, self-betrayal, of which the piteous meaning escaped the common eye. They concluded that this and thus was the man whom they had blindly respected. And

when his biographer followed in the same tone, perhaps it was little wonder that the pause of reverence and awe, with which three kingdoms saw the aged head of their greatest writer disappear into the grave, was broken with railing and with mockery on every side. These things are difficult to speak of with patience and moderation,—all the more that the impression thus deeply stamped upon the common mind when it was most ready to receive the image, is now we fear without remedy, an impression not to be effaced, and from which even the calmer judgment of posterity will find it difficult to get free.

One of Carlyle's earliest friends in London, and for many years most constant associate and companion, was a man in every respect so different from himself that it is curious to imagine how they could ever have found a common standing-ground. The calm philosophy of John Stuart Mill, his lucid and careful English, his character of mild sentiment and well-ordered thinking, would seem to have made it little possible that he could have found anything congenial in the tumultuous and rugged Scotsman with his whirlwinds of thought, his impassioned nature and diction. But that he did so, seeing at the first glance what was in the then ignored and unsuccessful author, is one of the greatest evidences of his insight and

understanding. Mill himself had been long known to the world as one of the first of the philosophers and thinkers of his generation, by far the finest production of the Utilitarian school, before the singular revelations of his autobiography brought the man himself and the secret of his being to the public knowledge. It was thus only after his death that the large circle of his countrymen, to whom he was personally unknown, came to understand the man whose works had been taught in their highest schools, and had shaped their own forms of thought for years.

He was born in 1806 in London, the son of James Mill, who was one of the most devoted disciples of Bentham, living under the same roof with that curious embodiment of Reason, Invention, and cheerful Self-absorption, in his later days:—and in himself a still more wonderful combination of the hard and the sensitive—of theory carried to the point of extravagance, the obduracy of iron in carrying out his own plans, and the sensibility of a woman to affront or coldness from others. John Stuart Mill was the eldest son of this singular man, and was taken by him remorselessly out of his cradle to be the subject of such a tremendous experiment as never father in his senses tried before. The Chinese bind up the feet of their women-children from their earliest years, but the elder Mill improved upon this

process and bound his child's mind at an age too early even to show the first bud of promise, in an iron machinery which crushed the very head and heart of the unfortunate boy into the mould which his merciless father meant him to take. The incredible age, at which he became a prodigy of learning, the iron bondage in which he lived, the ceaseless and awful processes of education through which he was put, and which took all childhood, all the delights of early youth from him, twisting his nature, and to a painful degree altering his natural constitution, he himself has told us. There is no more remarkable human document in existence. The unfortunate child subjected to this iron discipline was of a mild and moderate nature, incapable of rebellion. He had a mind naturally attuned to poetry and emotion, but was so set and bound by the remorseless machinery of his life, that when the period of manhood and freedom came, and the better aspect of existence was revealed to him, a miracle which befell through the poetry of Wordsworth, the sunshine came too late with its sudden warmth and lustre, and only awakened a wistful sense of something lost. Perhaps his education helped to promote the concentration and lucidity of mind which is shown in his greatest work, his *System of Logic*, and which has given it so important a place in the highest educational literature of his time.

His education was conducted exclusively by his father, and, according to his rigid system, without any beneficial distraction from school or college life. He was born under the very shadow of Bentham, and his mother would seem to have been one of those predestined producers of large families who have no leisure left them to exercise any influence upon their eldest born, even when they are capable of it, of which there is no evidence in this case: so that his last chance of the operation of simple life was lost. Mill made up for the deprivations of youth in this respect later on, by falling unreservedly into the power of a lady who shaped—we have no right to say otherwise than beneficially—the course of his after-life: though this revenge of nature involved him in his latter days in some questionable theories and special pleadings founded rather on communicated enthusiasm than on individual thought.

When his strange education was over, at the early age of seventeen he was placed in the severe routine of a public office, the India House in which his father's interest lay, and continued there, rising to a very responsible position and exercising much influence, from 1823 until the dominion of the "Honourable East India Company" came to an end in the convulsion of the Mutiny of 1857, and the Government of that vast dependency was transferred to the Crown. He was then offered a

seat in the Indian Council, a high and responsible as well as lucrative appointment, but retired instead from the official life which he had entered so early, and in which he had gained nothing but honour. There is very little of all this in his autobiography. It was, though full of public importance and real influence, but the background of that life of thought which was his element. Quite early in life he became connected with the *Examiner*, already spoken of in connection with Leigh Hunt, —one of the first of those weekly newspapers which combined literature with politics, a Liberal organ of great influence while it lasted, and conducted with much ability, to which he was a regular contributor for a long time:—and with the *Westminster Review*, also already referred to, the special representative of Bentham and his school, of which at a later period, 1835, he became for some short time the responsible editor, and in which he was for many years deeply concerned. His great work on Logic was published in 1843, and was at once received as a text-book and authority as well as the most lucid exposition of a science not usually attractive to the ordinary reader.

It was before this, however, that Mill made the acquaintance of Carlyle noted above, and that an incident occurred never to be forgotten in literary history. He had by this time attached himself

to the lady, then, and for many years after, the all-influential friend and mistress of his thoughts, and afterwards his wife—Mrs. Taylor, whom Carlyle speaks of not without a shade of ridicule as Platonica, with a not unnatural scoff at the unusual relationship, which there is no room to suppose was not entirely one of honour and innocence. To her Mill brought, as he brought everything, the manuscript of the first volume of Carlyle's *French Revolution*, which had been submitted to his friendly criticism by his own desire. It was at the moment when the Carlyles were struggling to establish their spare little household in London, and this book was the chief thing to which they looked, to produce not only a foundation of future possibilities, but actually their daily bread. One evening Mill made his appearance pale and haggard before the pair who welcomed him with their usual cordiality. He had the most appalling story to tell. He had taken the manuscript to Mrs. Taylor, and she had left it without special precaution on a table. Carlyle was a new man : and perhaps his papers, the beginning of a new book which might appear to the careless critic as little important as that extraordinary rhapsody of "Sartor Resartus" which was then appalling and scattering the subscribers to *Fraser*, did not seem to merit any special precaution. Mrs. Taylor's housemaid, naturally

still more indifferent than her mistress, took the scattered sheets and made them useful in the way of lighting her fires. The whole volume was destroyed before it was discovered : and this was the terrible tale which Mill had to tell. Had it been left to Carlyle's biographer to imagine how the confession was received we should probably have had a violent scene of reproach and denunciation, " Begone into the eternal darkness, you ! " a throwing out of window, or kicking downstairs of the woebegone and conscious culprit—and nobody would have been surprised had this been the result. The result was, however, that the husband and wife, exchanging one look of dismay at the dreadful news, immediately did their best to forget the effect of the catastrophe upon themselves, and to console the unfortunate man who was overwhelmed by his share in it. Mill was anxious, as may be supposed, to make up in any pecuniary way possible for this incalculable loss, and we believe that after some time Carlyle accepted from him a sum equivalent to its supposed market value, a hundred pounds (which was rigorously repaid) as a loan to supply daily wants while the first volume was re-written—a transaction calculated to make the unfortunate cause of this trouble feel more humiliated and small if possible, than before.

This tragic incident did not, however, interrupt

the friendship on either side. It could not be expected to have sweetened the intercourse with the Lady Platonica upon whom Mrs. Carlyle was never unwilling to discharge a sharp-pointed arrow in passing, from her swift and highly-strung bow.

Mill's great period of literary activity was in the early years of Her Majesty's reign. His *System of Logic* was followed by *Essays on Some Unsettled Questions of Political Economy* in 1844, on *Land Tenure* in 1847, and on *Political Economy* in 1848. In the year 1851, her previous ties being dissolved by death, he married Mrs. Taylor, and fondly attributed to her influence the works which he afterwards produced, beginning with the famous *Essay on Liberty* which is perhaps the one of his works most widely known, and which has influenced the greater number of readers. No longer in any point of view academical or scientific, he came by this work into the common field of literature, not indeed of literature pure and simple, but of that inspired by the universal science of abstract politics, which is open to all men. It was a work which took the world by storm and set multitudes of young imaginations aflame. His former works had established his reputation as a thinker, but the readers of a *System of Logic* must always be limited. The *Essay on Liberty* was fare for all. Nothing more luminous, more elegant in the moderation and grace of a chastened style, than this exposition

of a principle, could well be. There is no doubt that to many minds it was a revelation, although not containing anything that could be called new.

Another work produced more distinctly under the auspices of his wife cannot be said to have done him so much credit with the world—the curious impassioned book called the *Subjection of Woman*, founded upon that view which is general to the antagonists of every unjust system of laws, that all the dreadful consequences which evil-minded persons may work in its name, are always in action and general existence, unmodified either by the character of the times, or the nature of things. It is one of those ways of thinking which are called feminine, and which are no doubt logical, but which produce many false conclusions, and have a general air of specious and fictitious accuracy very exasperating to the reader, who knows the argument to be unreal but cannot prove it to be false. The *Subjection of Woman* was written with this idea—that all the laws in the statute-book against the independence and individuality of women were rigorously carried out,—and that they had altogether escaped the operation of that well-known habit of English law, which tends, by many contrivances and by the continual action of good sense and natural feeling, to modify the letter of the harshest enactment. In the same way there has

been much fine writing and some genuine feeling roused by a late decision in respect to the rights of a wife to leave her husband when she pleases, as if any legal right could make it a general thing for wives to forsake their husbands. Mill's work, however, though it brought him no credit, undoubtedly acted, with many other arguments and proceedings equally unproductive of honour to the speakers and writers, in producing those great and beneficial alterations and new stipulations in law which have made the position of women so much more independent and worthy, and quieted so many cries of well-founded grievance in our own days. Mrs. Mill died in 1858, and her husband mourned her in the almost lyric sorrow of the latter portion of his *Autobiography*, remaining devoted to her memory during all the rest of his life, as he had been devoted to her influence and inspiration for many years before she became his wife.

His after-career was varied by a short and inauspicious entrance into public life. He entered Parliament in 1865, but remained a member of the House of Commons only about three years, and though received there with the respect due to his great reputation and powers, never attained any influence or standing at all in proportion to that reputation. His strictly philosophical works will be considered in a later chapter. These included among others an exposition of *Utilitarianism*,

of *Positivism*, a collection of articles from the *Edinburgh* and *Westminster Reviews*, and an *Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*, which called forth much criticism. But the most important work of his ending life was the *Autobiography*, which presented him to the world in a light which the philosopher, the politician, the Utilitarian, the greatest of English Free-thinkers (so called) and apostles of Negation, had never appeared in before unless to those who knew him intimately—that of a sensitive, gentle, almost visionary being warped by iron swaddling-bands out of the development natural to it, contradicted in all its natural tendencies by an incredible and merciless education; and when these bonds were removed making haste to seek refuge in a sentimental subjection almost as wonderful as the preceding and involuntary bondage. The interested spectator looking on at this remarkable self-revelation is tempted to believe that the man so twisted and swayed by external influences would have found, had he been left to himself, a sustenance in religion, in poetry, in the aspirations of the Christian faith, for which he went wistfully looking all his life, but never knew where to find. It is not often we find a spirit so obviously forced into a different mould from that which was intended by nature. Generally the mind struggling against those artificial ligatures strikes into an almost exaggeration in opposition, of its

own natural bent and tendency. But Mill was seized upon in his very cradle, and the dutifulness and mildness of his soul helped to further the aims of those who worked into this mould of iron that ductile clay.

He died in Avignon in 1873 in profound retirement, never having recovered the blow of his wife's death which had taken place so many years before, and making of his autobiography a sort of swan-song of praise to her. A great writer, a generous and fine thinker, a most lovable man, calling forth, however, we think not more honour than pity, we can scarcely conclude this brief notice without an ache of the heart for the many deprivations which his creed and the ignorance imposed upon him caused to his sensitive being, and a hope that he found something so much better than he had ever dreamed of in the darkness which was all that Death promised him, as to make up for every consolation which he had not had in his mortal career.

It has been mentioned that one of the houses in London into which the Carlyles were most cordially received was that of the Austins, one of those brilliant families of which almost every member has in one way or another achieved distinction. John Austin, the head of the house (1790-1859), a somewhat dreamy man of abstract mind and great intelligence, occupied for some

time one of the chairs of Law in the newly-founded London University, and wrote a well-known and now standard book on Jurisprudence, which brought him, though slowly, a great reputation among those qualified to understand it. Much of his position in society and comfort in life was, however, owing to his wife, born a Taylor of Norwich, of a race which acquired much distinction locally and socially, without so far as appears any particular reason, except that they were highly intelligent and hospitable people. Sarah Austin (1793-1867) held an individual position in literature, such as at that time was held to be specially befitting to a woman. She did not pretend to be an original writer, notwithstanding some able articles in the *Edinburgh Review*, chiefly on foreign subjects—but she was a translator of singular ability and success. In this way she made known many of the more serious works of German literature then so very much less understood than now, to the English public, and especially, a most laborious undertaking, *Ranke's Lives of the Popes*. In lighter subjects she was the translator of the *Story without an End*. Her steady work gave a sort of backbone of support to her less industrious though more original husband, whose lectures she edited after his death with devotion equal to that which she had shown him during their long married life.

Lucie Austin, afterwards Lady Duff Gordon (1821-1869), the friend from her childhood of Heine, and the author of some sparkling and delightful letters from the Nile, as well as of several translations of important works, was the only child of this pair, and the mantle of these two highly instructed and eloquent women has fallen in the third generation upon Janet Duff Gordon, Mrs. Ross, who has with much filial piety and literary grace written memorials of both, in which a delightful and in many respects touching narrative is given of their lives.

The name of John Carlyle, "the doctor," who appears so constantly in the life of his distinguished brother, Thomas Carlyle, does not in that record play a very elevated part. But he has a certain place in literature through his remarkable and almost literal translation in prose of the *Inferno* of Dante. He had intended to translate the entire poem, but only the first part was ever completed or given to the world. It is full of a curious power and apprehension of the poet, a touch of genius breaking forth in a mind not otherwise gifted.

Another slighter and unimportant but pathetic figure, which occurs to the mind with the name of Carlyle, and is inseparably associated with him, is that of John Sterling, who wrote little in his own person, and therefore is but lightly connected with literature, but who had the singular fortune to

have two biographies written of his uneventful life, one of them insuring him a kind of immortality as being the production of Carlyle: the other already dropped into that oblivion whence it had indeed little right ever to be raised. He was the son of Edward Sterling, once the "Thunderer" of the *Times*, the man under whose influence that great newspaper became for a time the most curiously exact thermometer of public feeling in London if not in England, and gained in consequence a unique place among newspapers, the tradition of which lasted for a long time even after the reality failed. John Sterling was one of a band of young men who issued forth from Cambridge at the same time, and whose high spirituality of mind, and dissatisfaction with the ordinary level of religious thought and doctrine, produced afterwards, chiefly through the leadership of Frederick Denison Maurice, the movement generally called the Broad Church. Sterling himself, however, had little to do with this movement. He took Holy Orders rather from an impulse of chivalry and desire to do what he could for the improvement of the world, than with any more seriously considered motive, and was for a short time curate at Hurstmonceaux in Sussex under his friend Julius Hare; but remained for a very short time in that position, and afterwards, until his early death, led a vague sort of literary life without producing

anything that is much worthy of mention. He was one of those men whose rare qualities of mind and personal utterance raise the highest hopes in their friends, and inspire with a sort of vague expectation never carried out, the general public which hears so many echoes of their names on all sides without hearing anything tangible on which to form an opinion. He was born in 1806, and died in 1844, his *Essays and Tales, with Life by Archdeacon Hare*, being published in London in 1848—while Carlyle's amended, or at least much different account of his life was published some years later. It is no small tribute to the interest of his character and being that he should have so moved two such differing men.

The name of Sterling introduces another group of writers, some of whom belong more appropriately to the chapter devoted to Theology, though the name of one, a precursor rather than actor in the ecclesiastical movement, in which the others were engaged, may come in best here. Julius Hare, born in 1795, belonged to a family distinguished by a fatal fluency in letter-writing, so that the few facts in his career, the few works produced by him, and his beautiful character and life, so full of every grace of sweetness and courtesy, so irreproachable and graceful, are swamped by the flood of details both intellectual and external which a remorseless fidelity has

gathered together. His position, or rather it would be well to say *their* position, since his name cannot be separated from that of his elder brother Augustus, born 1792, was a peculiar one. Not only did they belong to that peculiar class of "elegant scholars," to use an old form, which has come to a new development in this century in the universally cultured, gentle, exquisitely moral and virtuous University Man who has now become one of the features of English society, most profoundly unlike the Parrs and Porsons of old ; but their half-foreign breeding and acquaintance with the literature of the modern world, especially the German, put a characteristic difference between them and their compeers in the earlier half of the century, which could scarcely exist now when European literature is within everybody's reach, and all people of education are expected to know something of continental countries. The elegant vagrancy of the parents of these two men, which is evidenced in the birth of one at Rome, and the other near Bologna, was of a very different kind from that which carries ordinary members of society now over the length and breadth of the Continent in a sort of whirlwind of Anglicism, retaining their own habits, their own surroundings and their own language wherever they go. The young Hares were to all intents and purposes Italian children in their earliest years, and later acquired a sort of German

nationality in the same way at Weimar, in the midst of the wonderful talk and circumstances of the Goethe circle. When this early expatriation was over they came back to the studies of English youth, in an atmosphere, and among a crowd of relatives, deeply imbued with religious thoughtfulness and powers of reflection. They became accordingly, with all these modes of culture mingling in them, the first models of that exceedingly pure, elevated, and fine—but perhaps slightly tedious type which has since become one of the ideals of University life. Their characteristic was thoughtfulness rather than any power of thought, and their minds were so imbued with the wisdom of the ages, and the inspiration of the thoughts of all other men who have ever reflected upon life and death, knowledge and ignorance, that little room was left for any original thinking of their own.

Nevertheless, their joint work, *Guesses at Truth, by two Brothers*, which was published in 1827, and of which an enlarged and corrected second edition was one of the notable books of 1838, the beginning of our period, was at that period an important production. It is in the shape of aphorisms, some brief, as becomes that form of writing, others enlarged into short essays, on abstract subjects, written well and agreeably without any special grace of style, and chiefly notable

in those days for the evidence of an all-pervading religious tone, which is unfortunately far from the habit of present discursive thinking. A whole world of difference in this respect will be observed by any one who compares these broken lights of the reflective mind with the *Obiter Dicta*, for instance, of a recent philosophising, not unlike in aim and principle. Julius Hare was in these early days much under the influence of Coleridge, sharing that semi-adoration of the poet-philosopher which inspired so many young men of the period. A beginning of the heterodoxy which was afterwards found in Maurice and Kingsley by the keen critics of the Orthodox schools was no doubt beginning to develop mildly in the *Sermons* of both brothers, published by Augustus and by Julius in 1839 and 1840. But they were both clergymen and most faithful sons of the Church of England, belonging to a highly characteristic school of her mild and refined divines.

Julius Hare was the tutor of Sterling, Maurice and Trench, afterwards Archbishop of Dublin, at Cambridge. It was he who induced the former to enter the Church and become his curate at Hurstmonceaux; and it was his *Life of Sterling*, in which the struggles of that vivacious spirit between Faith and Doubt were made to occupy the foremost place, which called forth the more

memorable *Life* by Carlyle. He died, Rector of Hurstmonceaux, a family living, and Archdeacon of Lewes, in 1855.

In the circle of these greater names, though but faintly connected with them, occur those of Albany William Fonblanque, chiefly known as editor of the *Examiner* newspaper already referred to, to which Carlyle, Mill and Sterling contributed, and William Johnson Fox, who occupied a similar post in the *Westminster Review*.

The former, Fonblanque, was a vigorous and graceful writer, though the articles which made the fortune of the *Examiner*, and seemed to open in that paper a new *genre* in journalism, did not stand, as we hear on the authority of Lord Macaulay, the test of republication in a book. He was also a contributor to the *Westminster Review*, but his name is chiefly connected with the paper which was in reality his creation, and which attracted the highest interest in the country, from the highest Liberal circles to the farm kitchen in Dumfriesshire, where Thomas Carlyle's family looked with excitement for every new number. Its success and the powerful support it gave to Liberal principles, secured in those days, when the support of literature was looked upon by successive Governments as of more

importance to the State than it is now, the attention of the Whig leaders, and Fonblanque received an appointment as chief of the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade, a not unsuitable post for a writer on subjects chiefly political. He died in 1872. The *Examiner* survived for a considerable time, but never with anything of the power and authority which it had in his day.

The life of W. J. Fox, once a familiar name in the busy annals of his time, has fallen more completely out of knowledge. It has been recalled, however, to the reader of to-day by the recently published *Life of Robert Browning*, in which he appears as the first critic and almost patron of the new poet. His life was a curious one, full of many vicissitudes. He rose from the humblest circumstances, educating himself by sheer energy and determination, and pressing on from the position of an errand-boy to that of the minister of a Dissenting congregation, with little help except from his own exertions. Literature was the staff by which he supported and pushed himself on to chapel after chapel, from the humility of a little Bethel in Chichester to a semi-fashionable pulpit in London, where his eloquence attracted many hearers. He had by this time become a Unitarian, adopting a creed always popular with the speculative, the resource

of so many clever minds who wish to preserve a form of religion ; but even in the freedom of that unrigid faith did not find range enough, and finally after a great deal of literary work threw himself entirely into politics. He became member of Parliament for Oldham in 1847, and as such his name was very well known for a number of years to the readers of the debates. He continued to write for the newspapers until his death in 1864, but has left nothing in literature, except by his connection with greater names, to preserve any memory of his own.

There cannot be said to be even an artificial tie between the popular writer and well-known man of whom we are about to speak, and those above recorded, except that he was contemporary—though younger—with most of them : and that his productions are so varied that it is difficult to put him in any distinct class of his own. He was one of the class of writers whose primary occupation is official life, the restricted (as we should say) existence of the public office—though among them have arisen as remarkable and important a writer as John Stuart Mill, a poet like Henry Taylor, a biographer like Spedding, that curious and unlovely compiler of material for history, Henry Greville, the excellent writer, critic, and editor, successor of Jeffrey, still happily with us,

Henry Reeve, the editor of the *Edinburgh Review*,—and many more. Arthur Helps, the subject of the present notice, a man who has produced almost as much as the whole of these put together, though with very varying success, was born in 1817, educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was the contemporary and friend of Lord Tennyson, as well as of many other well-known men, and a member of the "Apostles" Society. He began life as secretary to several ministers in succession, and early took up that crutch of literature which seems to come so naturally to men in his position. *Essays written in the Intervals of Business*, 1841, *Claims of Labour*, 1844—were his first productions. In 1847 he began the publication of *Friends in Council*, the work upon which his reputation is founded. It is a prolonged discussion of the questions most popular or most likely to move society, carried on by a succession of interlocutors, the caustic and critical Ellesmere being the chief speaker. It was in its time read everywhere, and re-discussed on all hands, and is the kind of book which affords an always agreeable fare for the mildly intellectual, who love to feel themselves associated with high thinking, and capable of it, without too great a strain upon their intelligence, or necessity of an understanding beyond the level of the ordinary mind. To

the mass of readers the debates and arguments of the "Friends," who turned over so many subjects, presented a new view of old truths which gave to the most venerable questions an air of novelty ; and even gentle dulness was able to believe itself victorious in argument when it agreed with one or other of the combatants. These combatants were not too sharply characterised or made too boldly into living personages : there was a lady among them, kept to a strictly feminine position in the courteous strife ; and occasionally a touch of story by way of explaining the position which the sceptic took in respect to most human affairs, or the amiability of his more Christian antagonist : but nothing that could impair the dignity of the abstract, or profane philosophy with any semblance of romance. The book was not addressed to either of the extremes of society, neither to specially literary circles, nor to the butterfly-reader who skims over everything presented to him. It addressed itself to the intellectual *bourgeoisie*, so to speak, the middle class of readers to whom the commonplace clad in a specious robe of seemly words is always more dear than anything else, and who are capable of making the fortune of any author who trusts in them. *Friends in Council* went accordingly into edition after edition. If it has a little faded now after nearly fifty years, that is because the tone of such

reasonings has changed considerably even for that respectable and Conservative crowd.

Sir Arthur Helps, who became a K.C.B. in 1872, and received from Oxford the honour of a D.C.L. in 1864, produced a numerous list of other books, some of superior quality. The *History of the Spanish Conquest in America*, published in 1856 and 1861, was a painstaking and careful piece of work: of the same order was the *Conquerors of the New World*, published between 1841 and 1855, and afterwards brought out separately in the form of independent lives of Columbus, Pizarro, Cortes, etc. He was also the author of one novel, *Realmah*, a romance of the Rasselas kind, much expanded and adapted to the readers of the nineteenth century who demand details and probabilities not thought of in an older time; and several plays, none of which, so far as we are aware, were ever produced on the stage. In 1862 while he held the position of Clerk to the Privy Council, a post which brought him within the personal acquaintance of the Queen, he was chosen by Her Majesty to revise and edit the *Collected Speeches and Public Addresses of the Prince Consort*, and was afterwards charged with the same office in respect to one of Her Majesty's own works, the *Journals of Life in the Highlands* which were published in 1868 and 1869. His refined mind, excellent taste, and experience made

this choice a happy one, as it was a distinction to his waning life, which closed amid an unusual activity of literary labour in 1875. His position in the world of letters was something of a paradox: he never rose to the highest sphere, yet was a universal favourite of the public, respected and meriting every respect: and while treating the loftiest subjects in a manner considered by a mass of readers both original and striking, he never really in any of his works rose above the region of the respectable commonplace.

George Borrow, whose name we place here for a reason very similar to that which has added Sir Arthur Helps to this chapter, because it is very difficult to classify him, was as wildly irregular in his career, as our previous subject was the reverse. He was one of the Free Lances of literature, master of a sparkling and picturesque style, as of an adventurous and roving temper, by stress of nature: and produced one of the most charming of discursive books of travel, as it might be by chance, with few traditions or prognostics in his favour. He was born in Norfolk, in the year 1803, and was educated in Norwich, where he received some countenance and encouragement from the much celebrated society of intellectual persons who made of that picturesque town a little centre of intellectual activity in the beginning of the century. After an attempt to settle in a

solicitor's office, a sphere which was not tempting to him, Borrow threw himself into that distressing kind of literary work, which is pursued by so many who have little qualification for it, and whose struggling heads are often never seen above water during laborious years of an unthankful career. After thus working for a long time unknown,—it is said that among other things he was once employed upon an edition of the *Newgate Calendar*,—he was engaged as a travelling agent by the British and Foreign Bible Society, and in the fulfilment of his duties travelled through Russia and Spain. The result of the latter journey, *The Bible in Spain*, is one of the liveliest and most delightful of books of travel, full of graphic sketches of a then very little known country, and revelations of a genial, daring, adventurous nature, such perhaps as has seldom been employed on the errands of a religious society. That he had the highest interest and devotion, however, in that work is shown from the fact that, when in St. Petersburg, he translated the New Testament into Manchoo, and afterwards the Gospel of St. Luke into the language of the gipsies, for which wandering people he seems to have been seized with the strongest predilection, so that the latter part of his life was entirely given up to them. The *Bible in Spain*, which is the work by which perhaps his name is most likely to be remembered, was

published in 1842. After this his life and his productions take another colour. *Lavengro*, a partly autobiographical work, in which the wild people with whom he had identified himself play the chief part, it being the story of a gentleman who joins these wandering tribes—*Romany Rye*, a gipsy story, *Romano Lavo-Lil*, a dictionary of the gipsy language, show by their names alone the character of the works. The *Gipsies in Spain* preceded his account of his adventures in the work of Bible distribution. The adventurous nature of the man found an outlet in this curious adoption of the interests and companionship of so peculiar a people. But his works upon this subject, though novel and strange, and retaining much charm of style and personality, do not come up to the charm of his great work as a Bible agent. He died in 1881,—little known, or rather dropped altogether out of the knowledge of the world.

CHAPTER IV

OF THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY, AND OF OTHER HISTORIANS AND BIOGRAPHERS IN THE EARLY PART OF THE REIGN

IT is hard to conceive a stronger contrast to the rugged and imposing figure of Carlyle than is presented by the other brilliant prose writer whose fame was already becoming known far and wide at Her Majesty's accession, chiefly through his political work. In appearance, as in mind, in thought, purpose and style they are as far apart as the two poles. It would be extremely difficult to make anything like a heroic figure of Macaulay, or to surround him with even pseudo-romantic attributes; and, fortunately for him, it would be quite impossible for the most indiscreet admirer to give any but a pleasant picture of his domestic relations. He is, perhaps, to some people the less interesting for being a model of all the domestic virtues; indeed, an

eminent writer of the present day has expressed his opinion that he was too good for any possibility of greatness. In thought lay perhaps the greatest difference of all. Not that Macaulay was disinclined to hero-worship of a kind, though the characters he would have selected for that cult would scarcely have been Carlyle's favourites, but in every other respect their methods of thought were as different as Macaulay's polished sentences are opposed to the dithyrambic utterances of the prophet of Chelsea. Metaphysics Macaulay loathed : and, though there might be some sympathy between him and Carlyle in their common delight in history, their predilection was prompted by entirely different aims and worked out entirely different effects. Macaulay loved history as one loves Shakespeare ; it was to him, in the first and highest respect, an unending series of scenes enacted by really living personages with whom he sympathised or differed as he might have done with his personal friends or the political characters of the day. The great charm to him was in the story, a story of matchless interest and eternal freshness, from the thousand various lights in which it might be studied, not an elaborate lesson on profound philosophical truths delivered *ex cathedrâ Naturæ*. And if he drew lessons for the day from his historical studies, they were not concerned with abstract principles, with the

cruelty and foolishness of one half of the human race or the subjection and misery of the other, or with elementary truths which might have attracted attention "at the court of Nimrod or Chedorlaomer," but were rather received as practical teaching of political justice and expediency such as might be suited to the most modern questions.

Thomas Babington Macaulay was born at Rothley Temple in Leicestershire in the year 1800. His father, Zachary Macaulay, was an ardent abolitionist, and secretary to the company formed by that party for establishing colonies of emancipated negroes on the West Coast of Africa. Of Tom Macaulay's childhood many curious stories are told, of the precocious learning with which he not only undertook but carried out a *Compendium of Universal History*, which, in his mother's opinion, gave a "tolerably connected view of the leading events from the Creation to the present time"—of his poem in the style of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, his hymns, which gained the approbation of no less a person than Mrs. Hannah More, and his odd sententious speech. He was educated originally at a small school at Little Shelford near Cambridge and afterwards at Trinity College, Cambridge. While at the University he distinguished himself as a speaker at the Union, and also by his contributions to Charles

Knight's *Quarterly*, started about this time, with Praed, Macaulay, Moultrie, Walker and the Coleridges as its principal contributors. This small periodical excited a good deal of kindly notice, and was favourably mentioned by Christopher North in the "Noctes" as a "gentlemanly miscellany, got together by a clan of young scholars, who look upon the world with a cheerful eye and all its on-goings with a spirit of hopeful kindness." Among Macaulay's contributions were his well-known poem of "Ivry" and many other pieces of verse, including some amatory lines in the first number which so shocked his father—who fortunately for Tom was unaware of the authorship—that he forbade him to have anything more to do with the publication. Fortunately, the decorous dulness of some succeeding numbers appeased the parental wrath and Macaulay was allowed to take up his pen again. His principal prose contribution was a "Conversation between Mr. Abraham Cowley and Mr. John Milton touching the great Civil War," of which the author himself thought highly, and not without reason. The *Quarterly Magazine* did not have a very long existence, coming to an end in its second year, owing to disputes among the contributors.

Meanwhile Zachary Macaulay, who had set up in business with his brother-in-law, Thomas Babington, as an African merchant, had met with

reverses, his mind being too much occupied by the anti-slavery cause to pay a due attention to business, and his partner being hardly equal to the conduct of affairs of such magnitude. When Tom Macaulay left college, he found his father practically ruined, and accepted the situation with perfect calmness, and the determination to set matters right again by his own exertions, which, impossible as it seemed to be, he managed to achieve in a few years with the help of his brother Henry. His support of his family, however, was not limited to material services of this description; the charm of his presence among them seems to have done more than years of unselfish toil on their behalf could have effected, to cheer and comfort their despondency. His attachment to his brothers and sisters, especially the latter, was devoted and reciprocal, and even the silent, austere father, broken down as he was by this last calamity, felt revived and encouraged by the presence of the son who could talk politics with him over the breakfast-table. A sketch given of him a short time before by his friend Praed may not be uninteresting. He is described as

A short manly figure, marvellously upright, with a bad neckcloth, and one hand in his waistcoat pocket. Of regular beauty he had little to boast; but in faces where there is an expression of great power, or of great good humour, or both, you do not regret its absence.

The homely features are said, indeed, to have been so thoroughly lit up by anything that awoke his interest, especially by the enthusiasm of talk which was his chief delight, as to compensate the absence of natural beauty.

To put himself in the way of doing something for himself and his family, Macaulay began to study for the Bar, to which he was called in 1826. He was, however, perhaps more fitted to succeed in the world of literature, and, in this profession, an unexpected prospect now opened before him. A year or so before, Jeffrey had written to a friend in London to make inquiries concerning any clever young men of Whig principles who could be found to assist him, as all the young men of Edinburgh were Tories. Macaulay was pitched upon as a likely contributor, and exerted himself to produce an article that would satisfy the dreaded editor of the *Edinburgh*. The result was his essay on Milton, suggested by Charles Sumner's edition of the newly-discovered treatise, *De Doctrina Christiana*. We do not profess any particular admiration for this paper, which appears to us to be marked by a somewhat florid exuberance of diction, which we are not accustomed to find in his *Essays*, and a general air of immaturity not unnatural to his age, and perhaps increased by a measure of timidity in a young author, approaching for the first time one of the greatest

pachas of literature, though we admit that timidity was not an ordinary characteristic of Macaulay. The article, however, was received with immense applause on all sides, Jeffrey being particularly enthusiastic. "I cannot conceive," he wrote to Macaulay, "where you picked up that style."

The path of literature was now open to Macaulay, but it can hardly be said that he followed it with great success for the next year or two. With the temerity of an untried writer, he sought some one to attack whom wiser men than he admired. The Utilitarian school of philosophy offered a conspicuous and easy mark, and against this he directed the whole force of his pen in a series of articles which he afterwards regarded with a certain shame, and refused to republish. The objectionable philosophy including in his mind the philosophers, he delivered a similar onslaught against James Mill's *History of British India*, for which in the preface to his collected *Essays* he afterwards made a manly apology, congratulating himself on the fact which he insisted "ought to be known, that Mr. Mill had the generosity not only to forgive but to forget the unbecoming acrimony with which he had been assailed, and was, when his valuable life closed, on terms of cordial friendship with his assailant." Indeed Macaulay, though not a malevolent, or even a naturally uncharitable man, was too ready

to form an unkindly judgment of his political adversaries ; the opinion of Sir Walter Scott, expressed by him in a letter to Macvey Napier, astounds us by its narrowness and prejudice, and we are certain that if any one had told him that his constant opponent, Croker, had any one good quality in his composition, honest, kind-hearted Macaulay would have been quite unable to believe it. To the enemy who made amends he could, indeed, be reconciled. His fury at the attacks made upon him in *Blackwood* expressed itself in a studied affectation of scorn, and that rueful laugh which is described in unclassical English as proceeding from the wrong side of the mouth ; but when his old enemy, Wilson, to whom such magnanimity was no effort, gave unmingled praise to the *Lays of Ancient Rome*, Macaulay was most anxious that he should be assured of the author's appreciation of the criticism. However, Macaulay's polemics were not his only nor his best work in the first few years of his writing for the *Edinburgh*. In 1827 appeared his masterly study of Machiavelli, perhaps chiefly remembered for the almost casuistical ingenuity of his apology for that great writer's cynical theories regarding treachery and assassination. The following year was marked by his admirable essay on Hallam's *Constitutional History*.

In the good old days of patronage, literary merit

had fifty times the chance of recognition that it can possibly have now, and Macaulay was not long in receiving a substantial token of the admiration felt for his genius. In 1828 the Lord Chancellor, Lord Lyndhurst, appointed him to a commissionership of Bankruptcy. Two years later Lord Lansdowne, having a pocket borough to bestow, thought it could not be better represented than by this clever young literary man, who accordingly entered Parliament as member for Calne in 1830. His first speech in the House of Commons, on the question of Reform, established his fame as a parliamentary orator. Perhaps the greatest tribute to the position which he at once acquired in the House was the fact that no speech of Macaulay's was allowed to pass without an answer, a leading debater of the Opposition always rising to reply when he sat down. A bill was brought in about this time to reform the Bankruptcy system, which, among other changes, destroyed the small office held by Macaulay; he, however, voted for the bill which was passed. In 1832 he was appointed Secretary to the East India Board of Control, and two years later was offered a post on the Supreme Council for India, with a large salary, which, though he had just been returned to the reformed Parliament for the new constituency of Leeds, he did not feel justified in refusing. He therefore sailed for India in 1834

and remained there for four years. His chief work while in Calcutta was done as President of the Committee of Public Instruction and of the Committee appointed to draw up a Penal Code and a Code of Criminal Procedure. The former code, in the preparation of which he took much the greatest share, though it is now believed that his colleagues, especially Sir John Macleod, rendered him considerable assistance, is one of his most enduring titles to fame. During the period of his expatriation he contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* the essays upon Sir James Mackintosh's *History of the Revolution* and upon Lord Bacon.

A great grief awaited Macaulay when he returned home full of joy and hope to those whom he had left behind. The household had been a sad one in his absence. "It is as if the sun had deserted the earth," wrote one of his sisters when he was away, and Macaulay himself felt the separation as keenly, though his incessant toil in India was on behalf of those he loved, to restore the fallen fortunes of his family. As soon as he had conquered in his struggle to attain this end, he returned to England with "a small independence; but still an independence"; but the home he arrived at was a house of mourning. Worn out in mind and body, with the bitter feeling—to one who had been a man of action—

of helplessness and dependence, even on his own son, allying itself with his bodily ailments, Zachary Macaulay had died about a month before his son's return. It was, perhaps, to distract his mind from this sorrow that Macaulay, after a few weeks' stay in England during which he dashed off one of his most brilliant essays, that on Sir William Temple for the *Edinburgh*, betook himself to Italy where he remained for some months. On his return early in 1839, he at once devoted himself to his work with renewed energy. His first duty was to the *Edinburgh*, for which he wrote a trenchant, yet not unkindly criticism of a somewhat reactionary treatise on the relations of Church and State by "a young man of unblemished character and of distinguished Parliamentary talents, the rising hope of the stern, unbending Tories,"—the young member for Newark, William Ewart Gladstone. Macaulay speaks with some severity of the views expressed by Mr. Gladstone, but kindly of the young man himself; he was too good a judge of men to harbour any prejudice against the extreme views of youthful genius. In the same year Macaulay was invited to stand for Edinburgh and was returned practically without opposition. Lord Melbourne, the Prime Minister of the day, was glad to strengthen a falling Government by the support of so brilliant a debater, and Macaulay was appointed Secretary-at-War with a seat in the

Cabinet. He held this appointment till the fall of the Ministry two years later, after which time, with the exception of a short period in the years 1846-47, during which he was Paymaster-General under Lord John Russell's administration, he never again accepted office.

He continued to sit in Parliament, however, and was still busy as a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*, but neither a political career nor periodical literature seemed to offer a sufficiently wide scope for his genius. He was anxious to achieve some really important literary work, and had already laid out the plan of a great historical book extending from the reign of James II. "down to a time which is within the memory of men still (1840) living." We all know that this great work was never finished, nor are we sure that it is to be much regretted. It has been calculated that if the whole period had been recorded with as much care and labour as Macaulay spent upon the fragment which he completed, the work could not have been in less than fifty volumes, which, at the rate of progress habitual to the writer, must have occupied a hundred and fifty years! The only chance of completing it would therefore have been by omitting the labour and research which made the work move slowly, and furnishing us with a hasty and superficial sketch of the whole, instead of the vivid and complete

picture of a part which has been left to us. Such a consummation could not be desired by any one.

The *History*, however, could not yet be got in hand. Macaulay's first production was the one which has perhaps made his name more widely known than any other, the *Lays of Ancient Rome*. The chorus of enthusiastic applause with which the *Lays* were received—Macaulay's veteran adversary, Christopher North, shouting with the loudest,—has not perhaps been uniformly echoed by the critics of latter days ; but with the far more important audience which lies outside the little circle of self-appointed judges and accepts their judgments only when it agrees with them, they have never lost their popularity. Every schoolboy knows them, to use a favourite phrase of Macaulay's own, though schoolboys are not usually partial to poetry ; but to the minstrelsy of Scott or Macaulay—it is much to mention them together—no healthy-minded boy refuses to listen ; nor should we think much of the boy who could not declaim some of the fiery sentences of Icilius, or describe exactly the manner of death of Ocnus or Aruns, Seius or Lausulus. Of older readers it is less necessary to speak, as he who has known Macaulay's *Lays* in his childhood has no occasion to refer to them again. There is an unfading charm in the swing and vigour of

the lines which bring to our ears the very sounds of the battle, the clash of steel and the rushing of the horses, "the noise of the captains and the shouting." "A cut-and-thrust style," Wilson called it, "without any flourish—Scott's style when his blood was up and the first words came like a vanguard impatient for battle." The praise is scarcely extravagant.

At the same time Macaulay was hard at work collecting his various *Essays* for republication. He had not wished to do this, considering it unadvisable to tempt criticism with a volume of occasional papers, however successful they might have been in a magazine; but the importation of pirated American editions left him no choice, and the collection was published in 1843. It was received with enthusiasm and at once attained a popularity which it has never since lost, and which certainly no collection of the kind has ever equalled. There is some reason to doubt the expediency of republications of this description, though they are certainly the means of preserving the fame of a periodical writer for future generations; and there are perhaps few cases in which they have any chance of becoming popular. We are accustomed to find collected essays or articles among the works of every eminent modern writer, but the volumes which contain them are usually the least read.

But Macaulay's *Essays* have achieved for themselves a position in popular literature as a work which every one delights to read, not for conscience' sake or duty, but merely as a thing to be enjoyed, which it may well be said no other essayist has equalled. They are so well known that any kind of detailed criticism would be superfluous; nor, as every one has his own favourites, would it be of any great use to make selections from among them. Yet we will own to caring least for those which deal with the political questions of the day and most for those of a historical or still more biographical character. The ease and charm of the narrative in such favourite essays as those on Clive and Warren Hastings cannot but be felt even by those who are most inclined to differ with Macaulay's estimate of his subjects. To us there is an even greater attraction in the light and yet elaborate studies of character as demonstrated in action, such as are contained in the papers upon Sir William Temple, and on Addison, or in the more weighty essays upon the Earl of Chatham—brilliantly begun in comparatively early life before the writer went to India, and continued ten years later with greater force and solidity of judgment towards the end of his career as a periodical writer,—to which a fitting complement may be added by the

masterly biography of the younger Pitt supplied by Macaulay to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and reprinted with his other contributions on Atterbury, Bunyan, Goldsmith, and Johnson, by Mr. Adam Black, the publisher, after the author's death.

Macaulay was, however, becoming impatient of the various occupations which prevented him from getting to work on his long-projected history. In 1844 he definitely closed his connection with the *Edinburgh*, which he had lately felt to be a great drag on him, having contributed only two more articles—those on Frederick the Great and Madame d'Arblay respectively—after the publication of the collected *Essays*. All this time he was attending to his Parliamentary duties, and some of his most telling speeches were delivered in the Parliament of 1841-47. His appointment as Paymaster-General in 1846 obliged him to seek re-election at the hands of his constituents, and, though no longer unopposed, as in 1841, he was returned by a triumphant majority over his adversary, Sir Culling Eardley Smith. Much sectarian opposition, however, had been excited against him by his action on the question of the grant to Maynooth College, and at the General Election in 1847, to the lasting shame of the constituency, Macaulay lost his seat. Wilson, his old literary adversary and political opponent, had

risen from a sick-bed to record his vote for the victim of what was generally felt to be an unjust persecution, and the public sympathy was freely expressed ; but Macaulay himself apparently did not feel the loss. It gave him, at any rate, a great deal of additional leisure to devote to his *History*, which was now so far advanced that the first two volumes were ready for publication in the ensuing year.

The success of the *History of England* from the first day of its appearance was phenomenal. A first edition of three thousand copies was exhausted in ten days, a second of the same size was entirely bought up by the time it appeared, and a third of five thousand was so nearly exhausted six weeks after the original issue that it was found necessary to print two thousand additional copies to meet the immediate demand. The excitement aroused by its appearance may be to some extent estimated by the fact that the Society of Friends thought it necessary to send a deputation to remonstrate with Macaulay for the view he had taken of William Penn. The honest Quakers were no match for the brilliant dialectician who successfully reasserted his views on the subject, though many have thought since that they had the right on their side. Lockhart wrote to Croker, who was waiting to measure out to Macaulay such criticism as had been meted to

his own edition of Boswell in days gone by,—that he had read the *History* through “with breathless interest,” but admitted that it contained so many inaccuracies that the greatest injury would be done to the author’s feelings by telling the simple truth about his book. Croker, however, wrote so savage a review that, in face of the general public approval, it hardly excited any notice at all,—though his strictures were hardly more severe than the criticisms of many later writers. For the time, however, opposition was hopeless, and the chorus of approval was hardly broken by one dissentient voice. Macaulay himself told an amusing anecdote illustrating its popularity at the time. “At last,” he wrote to his friend, T. F. Ellis, “I have attained true glory. As I walked through Fleet Street the day before yesterday, I saw a copy of Hume at a bookseller’s window with the following label: ‘Only £2 : 2s., Hume’s *History of England* in eight volumes, highly valuable as an introduction to Macaulay!’”

Whatever may be its value as a correct record of fact, Macaulay’s *History* is certainly a very remarkable production of literary art. It is perhaps one of the greatest efforts in narrative that has ever been made. From beginning to end we have a vast history—in the original sense of the word which we usually denote by lopping the first syllable—flowing on in a perfectly unbroken

stream, the thousand little rivulets that converge into the main flood neither neglected nor magnified into undue importance, but firmly and skilfully guided into their proper places as the component parts of a great whole. Nothing is more striking in Macaulay's work than this absolute continuity of story. There is no lack of adornment, of literary grace of style and picturesque detail, nor is there any point in which Macaulay's genius is more amply displayed than in the masterly, if occasionally prejudiced, sketches of character with which the *History* is interspersed ; but everything is subordinated to the central necessity of allowing no break or obstacle to the narrative. Thus we get those exquisite little portraits in miniature which Macaulay threw in with such wondrous skill, when he had to present a new character upon the scene whose antecedents or peculiarities it was necessary to know, but whom there was no time to describe at length. Even the finished and elaborate studies of individuals hardly distract the attention from the main story longer than it would take a reader to turn aside from the text of his book to look at a full-page illustration ; and these are only given when required as a foundation of knowledge on the subject, to give some idea what manner of man is presented before the audience ; for as to the real character of each actor, he will soon show that, in the only reliable manner, by

his actions. Macaulay's enemies are accustomed to say that these characters are only drawn with exactitude when it suits his partisan purposes to make them true ; otherwise they are exaggerated by partiality or discoloured by prejudice, and the story of their lives is told in such a manner as accords with the political views of the writer. To our mind such charges are brought on too general a scale ; but we are obliged to admit that in some cases they are not without foundation. We have already said that Macaulay often found it hard to do justice to his political adversaries, and we cannot contend that he was more impartial in the matter of statesmen of days long gone by to whose principles or conduct he was opposed. To him the men of the court of James II. were as real and living as those among whom he lived ; and among the former as the latter he supported his friends and attacked his enemies. He hated Marlborough as he hated Croker ; he spoke his hatred out as was his nature, and he refused to see any redeeming points in the character of either adversary,—we may say, indeed, that he was incapable of seeing them. We will not even deny that in the heat of his animosity he may have distorted facts ; for every student of history knows with what readiness those elastic trifles will assume all varieties of shape according to the glasses through which they are observed. But these, at

the worst, are in a few extreme instances, for which we at least are ready to forgive one of the only historians who has been able to make his readers live in the period of which he writes.

Coloured as his narrative may be, it is yet history, and history of the most profitable kind. The lecture-dried student, whose interest in history only tends to the answering of questions at an examination, or at best to endowing posterity with a set of cut-and-dried annals for the benefit of future candidates for honours, finds little use in Macaulay. He says both too much and too little and is too entertaining for the conscientious reader to study in working hours. It is like Partridge's judgment on the theatre, when he preferred the King in *Hamlet*, who was so obviously acting a part, to the quiet little man, Garrick, who spoke and moved as an ordinary mortal might have done. No one could possibly read one of Dr. Gardiner's valuable works without feeling that he was studying history ; when we read Macaulay, on the other hand, we feel more like the spectators of a great natural drama unrolling itself before our eyes. We are not even hearing the story told by one of the actors but actually looking on at what is taking place. This is to our mind the great superiority of Macaulay's work over those of more exact historians. Perhaps we may take an illustration of our meaning. Suppose that we

wished to form a correct idea of St. Peter's at Rome or St. Mark's at Venice. There are numberless works in which we could find exactly measured designs of the plan, elevations and sections of the buildings, from which we might gain a great deal of practical knowledge and be able to impart it to others. But would any one suggest that we should thus get anything like so real an idea of St. Peter's as could be derived from seeing one great picture of the whole, even if the artist had made the façade a yard too long or the cupola a couple of feet too high? So in Macaulay's great picture of the past, the reader can see at a glance more of the real life of the world as it was, than the most toilsome examinations of historical evidence can afford him. Not that we undervalue the latter. When the reader has taken in the sense and the story of the picture, by all means let him go and verify his measurements.

There is not very much more of Macaulay's life to record. The third and fourth volumes of the *History* were published in 1855, and the fifth and last was not finished at his death. It was a great disappointment to him to be unable to carry it further on, at least to the reign of Anne. In 1853 he was induced to make a collection of his speeches for reasons similar to those which had led to the publication of the *Essays*. His Parliamentary duties were resumed for a while, for

Edinburgh had repented in sackcloth and ashes, and, on the resignation of his old colleague, Sir William Gibson-Craig, put him at the head of the poll, though he was not able to be present to conduct the contest in person. His health, however, was failing, and, after being many times over-persuaded by his constituents, he insisted on resigning his seat in 1856. The next year he was raised to the peerage as Baron Macaulay of Rothley. He still worked at his *History* in his latter years and contributed to the *Encyclopædia Britannica* the articles of which we have spoken. His last days were peaceful, though somewhat overclouded by melancholy, and his end was peace itself, the gentle and easy transition that comes to some who scarcely seem to die but merely cease to breathe. Perhaps this was the end of Enoch. Macaulay died in the last days of the year 1859, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, in Poets' Corner, at the feet of the statue of Addison.

Among the historical writers of the early part of the reign there is certainly none who can put forward any claim to such eminence as Macaulay, at least among those who devoted themselves to the study of the annals of their own country ; but there was no lack of diligent and conscientious writers who made valuable contributions to this branch of literature. A deservedly conspicuous figure at

the commencement of the reign, as a leader of historical research, was that of Sir Francis Palgrave, Deputy-Keeper of the Records. Born in 1789, the son of a wealthy Jewish merchant, Francis Cohen—to give his original name—at first devoted himself to legal studies, first as a solicitor, and afterwards at the Bar, to which he was called in 1827. He had assumed on his marriage the name of Palgrave, which was that of his wife's mother. He was already known as the writer of some remarkable papers on historical antiquities and the editor of a collection of "Parliamentary Writs" for the Record Commission, on whose behalf he continued for many years to do much excellent work, rising to the position of Deputy-Keeper in 1838. His work, however, was not limited to productions of this official nature. Devoting himself with the ardour of a true student to the search for historic truth, he directed his attention to those obscurer portions of our early history of which previous writers had been wont to accept without inquiry any idle, half-legendary account which presented itself. In his *History of England during the Anglo-Saxon Period* (1831), and of the *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth* during the same period (1832), and, finally, in his greatest work, the *History of Normandy and England* (1851-64), Palgrave made the first really critical inquiry into the earlier ages

of English history, and even had he achieved less himself, would be worthy of high praise for his services as a pioneer in clearing the ground for those who came after. His *History of Normandy and England*, which was not completed at his death in 1861, is, however, a work of acknowledged merit.

A writer of less real merit, but perhaps more widely known, whose principal work was in progress at the time of the Queen's accession, was Sir Archibald Alison. Born in 1792 in a Shropshire village, of which his father—the author of an *Essay on Taste*, which received some praise in its day—was incumbent, of good Scotch blood on both sides, Alison was educated at Edinburgh University and called to the Scottish Bar in 1814. His success in the legal profession is evidenced by his appointment as Advocate-Depute and afterwards as Sheriff of Lanarkshire—in which important post he acted with equal ability and vigour during a very critical period—and also by his treatise upon *Criminal Law* (1832-33), which is still a standard work in Scotland. In 1829 he commenced his chief historical work on the *History of Europe from the Commencement of the French Revolution in 1789 to the Restoration of the Bourbons in 1815*, the first two volumes of which were published in 1833 and the tenth and last in 1842. Ten years later

he added a continuation of the history in six more volumes, bringing it down to the year 1852. This voluminous work, though ill-treated by the critics, was strangely popular in its day, and, setting style, prejudices and reflections on one side, it undoubtedly has its value as a full and continuous record of events in the period with which it deals. Among Alison's other works were his *Principles of Population* (1840), the *Life of John, Duke of Marlborough* (1847), the *Lives of Lord Castlereagh and Sir Charles Stewart, Marquesses of Londonderry* (1861), and an *Autobiography*, chiefly written in the years 1851-52, but only published after his death which occurred in 1867. He was a constant contributor to *Blackwood* and a Tory in politics; his political views, joined to his personal popularity, caused him to be elected Lord Rector of Marischal College, Aberdeen, against Macaulay in 1845, and of Glasgow University against Lord Palmerston in 1851.

A historian who ought to have achieved a much greater position than either of the writers we have quoted was Philip Henry, fifth Earl Stanhope, better known in literature by the title of Lord Mahon, which he bore by courtesy during his father's lifetime. Born in 1805, and educated at Christ Church, Mahon entered Parliament at an early age and sat there for many years without greatly distinguishing himself, though Sir

Robert Peel gave him some minor offices to hold at different times. His first start in literature was with a *Life of Belisarius*, published in 1829, to which succeeded his principal works, the *History of the War of Succession in Spain* (1832), and the *History of England from the Peace of Utrecht* (1837-52). His merits as a painstaking and judicious historian would be more generally recognised had he possessed greater skill as a writer. This quality, however, was unfortunately denied to him, and we can only speak with commendation of what his work might have been if it had been one degree less ill written. Setting aside the power of expression, he had almost all the qualities necessary for a good historian. Among his many other works were the *Court of Spain under Charles II.* (1844), *Life of the Great Condé* (1845), *History of the Rise of our Indian Empire* (1858), and *Life and Correspondence of William Pitt* (1861-62); he was also a frequent contributor to the *Quarterly Review*. The estimation in which his talents were held may be judged by his election as President of the Society of Antiquaries in 1846, as Lord Rector of the University of Aberdeen in 1858, and Chairman of the National Portrait Gallery—in the foundation of which he took a leading part—in 1857. He died in 1875.

A singularly different figure comes before us in

this review of historians in the author of a work, originally projected by Charles Knight, the *History of the Thirty Years' Peace*, succeeding the battle of Waterloo. Harriet Martineau,—born at Norwich in 1802, of a French Huguenot family, which had provided several generations of skilled surgeons to that city,—after making an early start in literature with a book of *Devotional Exercises for the Young*, published in 1823, devoted her time chiefly to a series of tales with a moral, illustrative of political economy, of which the *Rioters* (1846) is perhaps the best known. Miss Martineau was in early life a Unitarian,—of which sect her brother, Dr. James Martineau, of whom we shall have occasion to speak in another place, is still one of the most eminent professors,—and among her early successes were some prize essays on religious subjects published by a society of that persuasion. To the first set of tales, which were entitled *Illustrations of Political Economy*, succeeded others under the general head of *Poor Laws and Paupers*, and *Illustrations of Taxation*. These narratives, of a curiously prosaic and commonplace character, and discussing subjects—such for instance as the appropriation and cultivation of commons, on which public opinion has entirely changed since their day—quite unfit for such treatment, had nevertheless an astonishing popularity. In the year of the Queen's accession,

Miss Martineau published a book on *Society in America*, containing the impressions of a recent tour in the United States. Two years later came her first novel, *Deerbrook*, a work of considerable merit, which was followed in 1840 by the *Hour and the Man*, a courageous attempt to whitewash the savage negro leader Toussaint L'Ouverture. The next few years of her life were devoted to those tales for children on which perhaps her most lasting title to fame will rest, the *Settlers at Home*, and the ever-delightful *Feats on the Fiord*. Then came more tales also with a political moral, on the Game Laws this time. Miss Martineau's sympathies were with the people, to use the consecrated phrase which generally connotes a violent antipathy to all classes not belonging to the poorest quarter of the great whole, and her teaching is often unsound, but the stories proved to be admirably adapted to the audience addressed, and as the literary vehicle of the views to be inculcated. The *History of the Thirty Years' Peace, 1816-46*, which was published in 1850, is to our mind less successful. It is by no means so interesting as one would have expected from the writer of such clever stories, it goes slowly and drags on its way, and its movements are conducted in a kind of atmosphere of mild preachment which the ordinary reader will find somewhat enervating. In later life Miss Martineau became a positivist,

and published an abridgment of Comte's *Philosophy*. The principal work of her later life, however, next to the *History*, was her *Household Education*, which originally appeared in the *People's Journal*; she also contributed frequently to the *Daily News* and *Once a Week*. She died in 1876, an *Autobiography*, which she had left unfinished, being published after her death.

Other writers who have made less mark in the world devoted themselves to the history of Scotland, for a really valuable and interesting account of which the world has yet to wait. Among the inquirers into this difficult subject we should give special prominence to Cosmo Innes (1798-1874), known as the author of the *Origines Parochiales Scotiæ*, and of a number of valuable essays on the early history of the Scottish people,—not merely the barbarous chieftains and henchmen who grieved the soul of Carlyle,—as the editor of many ancient documents for the Bannatyne, Maitland and other antiquarian societies, and as Professor of History in Edinburgh University. The still obscurer annals of the extreme north were the subject of more than one work of merit at the commencement of the reign, the chief of which were the *Highlanders of Scotland*, published in 1837 by Mr. William Forbes Skene (1809-92), late Her Majesty's Historiographer in Scotland, and the equally interesting and more

weighty *History of the Highlands and of the Highland Clans*, by Dr. James Browne (1793-1841), best known in his own day as an excessively combative journalist. For those who do not seek for very solid information there is some attraction in the pleasing, though superficial sketches entitled *Lives of the Queens of England from the Norman Conquest* (1840-49)—afterwards supplemented by *Lives of the Queens of Scotland and English Princesses, connected with the Regal Succession of Great Britain* (1850-59)—by Agnes and Elizabeth Strickland. More value is attached to the *Lives of the Princesses of England* (1849-55), by Mrs. Mary Anne Everett Green, a lady who has done much good work for the Record Commission, and whose name as a historical scholar stands deservedly high. Another lady who also devoted herself to the study of English history was Miss Lucy Aikin (1781-1864), whose *Memoirs of the Court of Queen Elizabeth*, published in 1818, gained a fleeting popularity, not accorded to later similar sketches of the Courts of James I. and Charles I. Miss Aikin also produced in 1843 a *Life of Addison*, best known by Macaulay's essay thereupon, and wrote memoirs of her father, Dr. John Aikin, and her aunt, Mrs. Barbauld, these later works alone being within our period. Among writers of similar *mémoires pour servir*, we should mention the name of John

Heneage Jesse (1815-74), a dabbler in the court history at various periods from Richard III. to George III., and the author of a work on *London : its Celebrated Characters and Places*, which would be more valued were it not for the existence of the better-known *Handbook* of Peter Cunningham. His father, Edward Jesse (1780-1868), was the author of some successful *Anecdotes of Dogs*, and other works on natural history.

A more remarkable group of men is brought before us when we turn to that division of literature which bears the somewhat loose technical term of ancient history. The names of Dr. Arnold, Dean Milman, Bishop Thirlwall and Mr. Grote are known in a larger field than that of literature, though it is only in their quality of writers that we are called upon to judge of them. From our point of view, Arnold, for instance, is not the great headmaster of Rugby, but the much less important historian of Rome. With this apology, which must be taken to apply to a number of personages mentioned in various parts of this work, we may give such particulars of their career as are necessary to the comprehension of their position in literature.

Thomas Arnold was born at Cowes in the Isle of Wight in 1795, and educated at Winchester

and at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where he obtained a first-class in classics in 1814, afterwards being elected to a Fellowship at Oriel. The society at Oriel, where Coplestone, Whately, Keble, Newman, and others of equal distinction were then resident, had, no doubt, a profound influence upon his manner of thought and conduct. After taking deacon's orders in 1818 he spent some years in the retirement of Laleham, a quiet village situated on an extremely unattractive reach of the Thames, not far from Staines, where he took pupils to prepare them for the University. In 1827 he was appointed headmaster of Rugby School, where his old friend Dr. Hawkins, afterwards Provost of Oriel, predicted that he would "change the face of education all through the public schools of England." If this prophecy was not carried out to the letter, it must at least be owned that the influence of Arnold's headmastership was widely felt, though most especially by those who came under his personal influence. Up to this time Arnold had done no literary work, though he had projected much ; indeed, he never carried out the half of his intentions in this matter, for his life was short and his time much occupied with affairs of greater immediate moment. In his early days at Rugby, his biographer, Dean Stanley, tells us Arnold had formed a threefold conception of the literary work which lay before

him ; it was to include a history of Rome, a commentary on the New Testament, and a treatise of some kind upon Christian politics, or the proper functions and relations of Church and State. The first of these ideas was practically the only one that he ever realised. In 1829 appeared the first volume of his *Sermons*, the third and last of the original edition being published in 1834, and between the years 1830 and 1835 his edition of *Thucydides*, a work of which every true student of Greek literature has felt the value, not so much as a piece of teaching as in the light of a pleasant companion in the study of one of the most fascinating of ancient writers. Thucydides had always been a special favourite with Arnold, who was a thorough scholar in the old sense of the word, at a time when the enthusiasm of scholarship was not limited to small philological or grammatical questions.

The *History of Rome* belongs to the literature of the present reign, the first volume having been published in 1838, and the third and last in 1843, after the author's death. A supplement was published in 1845 giving the history of the Republic from the end of the Second Punic War to its final extinction by Augustus, drawn from articles contributed by Arnold to the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana*. The Roman history is still regarded as a valuable work, and is sufficiently entertaining to the reader ;

the account of the earlier periods is almost entirely drawn from the work of Niebuhr, whom Arnold regarded with excessive veneration. The rest of Arnold's literary efforts are chiefly of a polemical character. He was a man of strong opinions, both on political and religious subjects, and he thought shame to conceal his views on any subject ; nay, rather, he considered it his bounden duty, perhaps overrating the power of his pen, to thrust them upon the public. His views were catholic and liberal. He regarded the Church—not the priesthood but the whole body—as inseparably linked with the State, for the advantage of the latter ; he would have had the Church to be a really universal institution, in which Anglicans and Dissenters were to be induced to live together, even if it required the celebration of different services according to different rituals at different hours on the same day in the same church ; and, above all, he desired to see the principles of Christianity asserted in everyday life, whether private or public. These views he asserted freely, and perhaps occasionally with the intolerance of an enthusiast, in a number of pamphlets upon Church questions and in newspapers. He even founded, together with his nephew, John Ward, for the diffusion of these opinions, a weekly newspaper of his own, entitled the *Englishman's Register*, which lived through a

portion of the year 1831. In 1841 he was appointed Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, and in the following year he died, suddenly, at the early age of forty-seven.

A contemporary of Arnold, though he outlived him by many years, who is perhaps more a historian of the Church than of Rome, but who seems to come in not unfitly here, was Henry Hart Milman. Born in 1791 and educated at Eton, and Brasenose College, Oxford, of which he became a Fellow in 1815, Milman made his first appearance in literature at an early age as a poet. He had, indeed, while an undergraduate obtained the Newdigate prize for a poem on the Apollo Belvidere, but, nothing daunted by this, he continued to write in verse, and in 1815 gave to the world a tragedy called *Fazio*, which was actually produced at Covent Garden with considerable success. Being appointed to a living at Reading, he fell back upon religious poetry, epic and dramatic,—but in no case for the stage,—with such effect that he was chosen to be Professor of Poetry at Oxford in 1821, and thus encouraged to persevere, till he closed his poetical career five years later with the tragedy of *Anne Boleyn*. The University, with a natural sense of the fitness of things, thereupon made him Bampton Lecturer for the year 1827, and Milman turned his attention to the more sedate study of history, producing

in 1829 a *History of the Jews* which made the hair of the University stand on end. This did not, however, arrest the author in the tranquil path of ecclesiastical preferment, as he was appointed in 1835 to a canon's stall at Westminster together with the Rectory of St. Margaret's. At the beginning of the reign, he was engaged upon what is generally regarded as one of the best editions of Gibbon. In 1840 appeared his *History of Christianity from the Birth of Christ to the Abolition of Paganism in the Roman Empire*, to which was added, fifteen years later, his greatest work, the *History of Latin Christianity to the Pontificate of Nicholas V.* The latter history, especially, shows an amount of learning and research, together with a judicious insight into the best principles of criticism, which were not so common in Milman's time as people are fond of saying they are now. The *Latin Christianity* is still a valued book of reference, and gives its author a more lasting title to fame than many *Martyrs of Antioch* could do, even with the addition of Sir Arthur Sullivan's music. Milman was appointed Dean of St. Paul's in 1849 and retained the appointment to his death in 1868.

A somewhat incongruous figure to appear in this company has nevertheless a right to be mentioned in connection with Roman history. Sir George Cornewall Lewis (1806-63), another

product of the healthy combination of Eton and Oxford, was best known as a politician, and held various important ministerial offices, including those of Home Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was also a prolific writer, chiefly upon more or less political questions, among his most successful treatises being *Remarks on the Use and Abuse of Political Terms*, and his *Essay on the Government of Dependencies*, the latter of which has been recently reprinted. This class of writing is seldom entertaining, and in Sir George Lewis's hands becomes exceedingly dry ; but there is more life in the more important work which leads us to class the author among the students of ancient history, a ruthless dissection of all legends, traditions, and hypotheses, entitled an *Inquiry into the Credibility of the Early Roman History*. We have small sympathy, as a rule, with the demolishers of traditions. It is certainly not a work of mercy, and seldom of necessity ; indeed, it usually reminds us, especially when carried out with undue violence, of the unnecessary efforts of Panard's stage hero :—

J'ai vu Roland dans sa colère
Exercer l'effort de son bras
Pour pouvoir arracher de terre
Des arbres—qui n'y tenaient pas.

But there is certainly in this author a refreshing vivacity of attack, hitting out all round, not only

at the good, easy legends by which children are lured on to think there must really be something to read in history, but with equal force assailing the calm assumptions of the scientific Niebuhr, which gives a somewhat pleasurable sensation to the reader. Besides other literary work, Sir George Lewis became, on the death of Professor Empson, the editor of the *Edinburgh Review* for about a year, being succeeded on his retirement by the present editor, Mr. Henry Reeve.

About the same period in the early part of the reign were produced two of the most successful and valuable works on the history of ancient Greece which have yet been given to the world. Strikingly different in life, manners and writing as the two historians were, they are brought together by their common study, and after the work of their life was done, they sleep side by side in Westminster Abbey. Adhering to the chronological order of their works rather than to the age of the writers, we must take the youngest first. Connop Thirlwall was born in 1797, the son of an English clergyman, and educated at Charterhouse, and Trinity College, Cambridge. In early life he had shown some literary ability, and his father had taken the perhaps unnecessary trouble of collecting a number of his productions in prose and verse, which were published in 1809 under the title of *Primitiæ*. Thirlwall had

originally chosen the Bar as a profession, but afterwards entered the Church, and was soon appointed to a valuable living in Yorkshire. Like other young men of his time, he fell under the influence of the new criticism which was then startling the world by its daring system of replacing doubtful tradition, by clever guesses at the possible truth resting upon a still less solid foundation; and in collaboration with Julius Hare he commenced a translation of Niebuhr's *History of Rome* in 1828. It was not till a few years later that he set to work upon his *History of Greece*, which was in its original form a contribution to Dionysius Lardner's *Cabinet Cyclopædia* (1835-47), but was afterwards published separately in an enlarged form (1845-52). It is a work full of interest and much more readable than the more elaborate history of Grote, though the latter has to a great extent supplanted it as a work of reference. Thirlwall's *History* will, however, always retain its value, and certainly deserves more attention than is generally paid to it. In 1840 Thirlwall was appointed Bishop of St. David's, an office for which he proved himself to be admirably suited. From this time to his retirement thirty-four years later his work was confined to the administration of his diocese. He was, however, a member of the committee appointed to revise the translation of the Old Testament.

After his death in 1875, a new side of his character was revealed to the public in the charming series of *Letters to a Friend*, published in 1880.

A singular contrast to the kindly Bishop of St. David's was the hard-headed German banker-philosopher, George Grote. Born in 1794, and consequently three years older than Thirlwall, he also was educated at the Charterhouse; but three years makes a serious difference with boys, and the future historians of Greece do not seem to have come much in contact though they were friends in later life. At sixteen he was established in the banking-house, set up by his grandfather, Andreas Grote, the first member of the family who settled in England, of which he became the head on his father's death in 1830. In early life this very serious young man fell under the dominion of James Mill, and established a little philosophical society of kindred spirits, who met at his bank to discuss abstruse subjects at the gruesome hour of half-past eight in the morning, before business. In 1821 appeared his first publication, a *Statement of the Question of Parliamentary Reform*, to which succeeded other forgotten pamphlets and some unimportant journalism. Grote sat in Parliament as member for the City of London from 1832 to 1841, and held a leading position among the section of

philosophical Radicals. His retirement in 1841, when his chances of re-election were extremely doubtful, is generally attributed to a desire to continue his work on the *History of Greece*, which had been commenced several years before. The first volumes, however, were not published till 1846, and the publication of the work extended over a period of ten years, the last volume appearing in 1856. Grote's *History of Greece* is undoubtedly a work of considerable value, though lacking the literary merit which we find in that of Thirlwall. It is an extraordinarily elaborate work, which contains perhaps all that can be said—or could be said then—on its subject, and enters at great length upon many matters, apparently of detail, which less careful historians are apt to slur over. Though we cannot say that it contains nothing but information, there can certainly be little complaint as to anything being left out, and to the student, whose interest in history is limited to facts, there is much to be learned from Grote. It may be said that he occasionally is too exact in following the ancient historians; his account of the Athenian expedition against Syracuse and the earlier years of the Peloponnesian war generally, being little more than a translation from Thucydides, including even the imaginary speeches put by that great historian into the mouths of the various statesmen and ambassadors of his period.

As a literary work, the prolix and tedious history can hardly be said to have any merit. In later life, Grote devoted himself more to the study of Greek philosophy, his principal works in this line being his *Plato and other Companions of Socrates*, published in 1865, and his *Aristotle*, which was not completed at his death in 1871. He also published in 1868 a *Review of John Stuart Mill's Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*, originally contributed to the *Westminster Review*. A biography entitled the *Personal Life of George Grote* was published in 1873 by his widow, Mrs. Harriet Grote (1792-1878), who was already known in the ranks of literature by her *Memoir of the Life of Ary Scheffer* (1860) and other works.

It is always a somewhat difficult task to apportion to biographers their exact place in literature. So much depends, not only on the skill of the writer and his interest in his work, but also on the subjects that he selects, that the ordinary rules of literary criticism do not always apply. Much too seems to depend on the relation of the writer to his subject. Out of the three works which we should consider unapproachably the greatest biographies ever written, Tacitus's *Agricola*, Boswell's *Johnson*, and Lockhart's *Scott*, two were written by the sons-in-law of great men whom they regarded with a really

filial devotion. Boswell, on the other hand, had no relation of kinship with the subject of his memoir, but the enthusiasm of the disciple—and of a disciple whose ardour was little restrained by the ordinary bounds of discretion—here supplied all that could be inspired by the closest family ties. Something of the same relation of master and disciple marks a biography published in the early years of this reign, to which has been assigned since its first appearance a measure of praise which we own to thinking somewhat excessive. Arnold and Stanley had, indeed, been literally master and pupil in the latter's school-days, but there is something more than this partly accidental tie in the disciple's feeling of which we have spoken.

Before dealing, however, with the biography, it is necessary we should say something of the biographer. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, son of the Rev. Edward Stanley, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, was born in 1815 and educated at Rugby under Arnold, and at Balliol, where he distinguished himself greatly, taking almost all the prizes it was possible for him to get. His attachment to his old schoolmaster, of whom he also had personal knowledge as a friend of his father's, seems never to have been interrupted from the early Rugby days in which he had learned to look up to him with something more than the

reverence of a favourite pupil. At the time of Arnold's terribly sudden death, Stanley was staying in his house, and had the painful task of conveying the news to such of his children as were not present. He was at once, in spite of his youth, regarded as the proper person to be charged with the duty of recording Arnold's life, and old friends of the latter holding the highest positions in the kingdom were pleased to join in helping this brilliant young man with all the materials at their disposal. The result was the *Life of Arnold*, published in two volumes in 1844, and at once received with a chorus of approval, due perhaps chiefly to its subject, but which has hardly diminished in the course of time even now when both Arnold and Stanley have become men of the past. It is assuredly a work of loyal affection, written with the sole object of setting before the world the greatness and goodness of his master, the author modestly effacing himself entirely from the record. To us, however, it bears an appearance of diffuseness and verbosity, resulting in part from the extremely minute analysis of Arnold's conduct and motives in every branch of life, which we are inclined to think at the present time at least somewhat superfluous. The arrangement, too, is faulty, the separation of the text of the biography from the very numerous letters published along with it, contributing to

deprive the former of its energy and the latter of their interest. The popularity of the work, however, as we have said, has in no way decreased. Stanley was also a fertile writer on other subjects, his *History of the Jewish Church* being perhaps his most celebrated work, while his *Sinai and Palestine* (1853) is still considered as one of the most valuable contributions to a subject which never stands still. It was perhaps, however, principally by his personal gifts that Stanley attained his high position in the Church and in the world generally. He was appointed a Canon of Canterbury in 1850, and Dean of Westminster in 1863, retaining that office up to his death in 1881. He was also Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford, and was twice select preacher to that University.

Some valuable collections of biographies have also to be recorded. Few more important contributions to this department of history can be found than Campbell's *Chancellors* and Hook's *Archbishops of Canterbury*. The elder of these writers, John Campbell, the son of a minister at Cupar-Fife, and of course a descendant of the house of Argyll, was born in 1779 and educated at the University of St. Andrews. He was at first intended for the Church, but afterwards chose the Bar as a profession, in which he rose to great eminence, being appointed Q.C.

in 1827, Solicitor-General in 1832, Attorney-General in 1834, Lord Chancellor of Ireland in 1841, Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench in 1850, and finally Lord Chancellor of England in 1859. He had also held other non-legal posts in the administration, and sat in the House of Commons from 1831 till he was raised to the Peerage in 1841 by the title of Lord Campbell. It was about this time, when he had gone out of office with Lord Melbourne's Ministry, that he found time to devote himself to literature. He had already written books on legal and political questions, but his mind was now bent on a more purely literary success. He thought for a while of a "History of the Long Parliament," then of a series of lives of the Irish Chancellors, which he gave up as not likely to prove interesting. The first volume of his *Lives of the Lord Chancellors and Keepers of the Great Seal of England* was published in 1845, the third in 1847, a supplementary volume containing the lives of his contemporaries, Lords Lyndhurst and Brougham, after his death in 1869. These biographies are carelessly written in an extremely slovenly style, and are in many cases inaccurate and unjust; but they never fail to keep up the reader's interest, and especially in the latest volumes, where Campbell is writing of his own time, are full of vivacity,—of prejudice too,

it is said, perhaps more than the previous ones, but one can safely say of all Campbell's biographical work that the unpardonable sin of dulness is not included in the list of his transgressions. To the *Chancellors* succeeded the *Lives of the Lord Chief Justices* (1849-57), to which may be generally applied what we have said of the earlier work. It does not come within our province to speak of Lord Campbell's eminence as a lawyer. He died in 1861.

The biographer of the Archbishops of Canterbury moved in a very different sphere. Walter Farquhar Hook, son of James Hook, Dean of Worcester, known chiefly for his musical talents, and nephew of Theodore Hook, was born in 1798 and educated at Winchester and Christ Church. In 1821 he was ordained and became curate to his father, then Rector of Whippingham in the Isle of Wight, and after various changes, was promoted in 1837 to the important post of Vicar of Leeds, which he continued to hold for more than twenty years. His ecclesiastical opinions originally inclined towards the strong High Church party who were paramount at Oxford in the commencement of the reign, and his great sermon, "Hear the Church," preached before Her Majesty in the Chapel Royal in 1838, was considered one of the most effective utterances on that side. Hook, however, was not

inclined to go so far as the other leaders of the Oxford movement and his views became much modified in course of time. In 1859 he was appointed Dean of Chichester, which post he retained till his death in 1875, steadily refusing the offers of promotion which were continually pressed upon him. It was at Chichester that he achieved his great literary work, the *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, of which the first volume appeared in 1861, and the eleventh and last just after his death in 1875. He had not been able to carry on the series beyond Archbishop Juxon, whose episcopate closed a few years after the Restoration. Hook's *Lives* are undoubtedly of considerable historical value, and show much care and research, but it cannot be denied that they are occasionally one-sided and too frequently heavy. Hook was also the author of many works on ecclesiastical and other subjects, of which the best known is probably his *Church Dictionary*, published in 1842.

The record of authors who devoted themselves to biography on a large scale can hardly be closed without a reference to a most diligent worker who is still living and still at work. Samuel Smiles, in his earlier days a man of various professions as surgeon, journalist, and secretary to various railway companies, has during

a long and useful career produced a great number of works chiefly designed to point out the manner in which men of talent have struggled on in spite of difficulties to a position for which their origin and education did not seem to qualify them. Among his best known works are the *Life of George Stephenson* (1857), *Self-Help; with Illustrations of Character and Conduct* (1859), *Lives of Engineers, with an Account of their Works* (1861), and the *Scottish Naturalist*, one of the best of the series. Mr. Smiles has also contributed largely to the *Quarterly Review* and other periodical literature.

CHAPTER V

OF THE GREATER VICTORIAN POETS

WE had little reason to expect that the reign of Queen Victoria should have been distinguished as an age of the highest poetry. The preceding fifty years had given birth to the noblest school of poets since Queen Elizabeth's "spacious times"; and it would have been natural to look for a period of *relâche*, a dying out of the great fires and paling and cooling of nature after an effort so immense as that which produced a band so great and so different as to include Wordsworth and Coleridge on one hand and Byron and Shelley on another. But happily for the wealth and honour of our age this was not so, and Wordsworth had not ceased to write when there arose from the very bosom of the young generation the new music and individual voice of Alfred Tennyson, this time no voice of the mountains, no defiant challenge of society, no

weird strain out of the unseen, but the most English of poetry, with the inspiration in it of the plains and low-lying levels, the rich and quiet fields, the midland country with Locksley Hall lying in the wide landscape of its meadows, and the problems of actual life and thought, replacing all tumults and commotions of a revolutionary age. The new poet, born in 1809, was the son of a Lincolnshire clergyman, of good family and connection, coming out of the very heart of long-established and tranquil living, the parsonage and the hall; and trained among his peers at Cambridge, uneccentric, breaking no seemingly bonds of life. His first production of all in 1829 was a prize poem on the very unattractive subject of *Timbuctoo*, of which, as of other prize poems, the world knows little. In 1830 as he touched the first edge of manhood he brought out a modest volume in concert with a brother. Two brothers of Lord Tennyson indeed have shown poetical power and contributed some poems to literature which but for the overpowering fame of the chief singer of the name would have received more recognition. But it is natural that in the extreme light of his pre-eminence their individual work should have been thrown into the background.

Another volume of poems followed in 1832, and two volumes in 1842, when his reputation

may be said to have been established, though amid many criticisms and protestations. "School-Miss Alfred" with his "blue fly singing in the pane" made much sport for a certain class of writers, and the poems addressed to Airy Fairy Lilian and other beauties of her kind, though already distinguished by beautiful versification, afforded naturally to the adversary much occasion to blaspheme. To write "Who would not be a merman bold?" was to tempt the contemporary critic beyond all power of self-restraint. The wonderful picture, however, of *Locksley Hall*, and its story so skilfully told, with an entirely new power of suggestive narrative, took possession at once of the public mind and imagination, a result which the extraordinarily clever parody produced by Professor Aytoun and Sir Theodore Martin in the *Bon Gaultier Ballads*, rather contributed to than lessened; while such poems as the *Two Voices*, the *Lotos-Eaters*, etc., seized the attention of the higher critics: and the *Queen of the May* charmed the multitude less capable of lofty flights.

The early volumes were chiefly composed of those shorter poems which in almost all cases form a poet's chief charter and title to universal fame; but Mr. Tennyson's reputation was so completely established by the time his *Princess* appeared in 1847, that in the three kingdoms there was no

house interested in poetry or the highest literature, where this new work was not eagerly seized and discussed as one of the chief topics of the day. Such a warmth of contemporary interest does not always secure the final verdict of fame, but it always shows the immediate grasp which a writer has attained of the mind of his time. The fantastic theme of this beautiful poem was rather calculated to discourage than to increase the interest of the public, nor was there anything novel in the treatment of the "woman question" suggested in it: but it was full of poetry, and the snatches of exquisite song which broke into the narrative here and there were like the little melodies in a piece of scientific music grateful and delightful to the common ear.

It can scarcely be said, however, that this poem added much to the writer's fame, and it was not perhaps till the publication of *In Memoriam* in 1850 that Mr. Tennyson assumed the supreme position which he has always fully maintained: although it was in the beginning of the same year, but before that publication, that he received the post of Laureate with a sort of universal consent of society, nobody venturing to suggest a more worthy wearer of the wreath. Criticism has died away into an almost sacred respect for this unique poem: but naturally that was not the case when it first appeared, when it was very

sharply, not to say contemptuously hacked to pieces by the haste of contemporary opinion, the occasionally harsh verses which occur here and there in a strain of almost unexampled melody, and into which the philosophy of his theme led him, held up to public remark—as well as that philosophy itself which was assailed by all the darts of both orthodox and sceptical opposition. These outcries, however, which are sure to attend the production of every work of importance, were soon hushed in the universal adoption of this wonderful poem into the very heart of hearts of the English-speaking world. It was said to be a profanation of grief laying it bare to the public eye, as it was said also that the author's claim to represent the anguish of loss when what he had lost was "only a friend" was a presumptuous assumption of experience which belonged to more poignant and intimate bereavement; the fact, however, remains that no such representation of the mind of grief was ever written. It is not an elegy like *Lycidas*: it is not a song of consolation, such as those in which many inferior voices have attempted to persuade the mourner that he ought to rejoice instead of grieving. It is sorrow itself which takes the word, embodying as no poet had ever done before, the long discursive wanderings of melancholy thought, the mingled train of recollections—sudden pictures of the past

disclosing themselves through those tears which are never long absent from the musing eyes, sudden arrows of a remembered word passing swift through the heart : and all returning and returning like the flight of a bird, however long he may have been on the wing—to the one point, the central fact of the universe to the mourner, the certainty that “he whom thou lovest is dead.” It is not in the first anguish of such a catastrophe that one would put *In Memoriam* into the sufferer’s hands, but a little later, when he has begun to feel how amid all the enforcements of external life and all the efforts of returning vitality his thoughts return with a persistent force which is beyond his control to the vacant place which makes the whole world empty of attraction—and that, not only through the great questions which arise from this void and the mysteries which surround it, but by a hundred trivial things which are all pervaded by that thread, and bring him back and back to the one unchanging fact which is the centre of all. This is the secret of the power of a poem which is, to many, a sacred thing like nothing else in the world. The poetry as well as the inspiration is perfect for this hallowed purpose. “The swallow flights of song that dip their wings in tears” carrying the mind with them afar into many a flight of its own : the constant return, dropping from pensive skies of twilight, as from the blaze

of the remembered sunshine that can shine no more, to that green spot where the beloved is not: and the realisation of life which is no longer a joyful interdependence as when two walked together in the golden fields, but now a lonely path amid the thorns. The poet gathers up mournfully all those links of association by which every trivial moment and movement are connected with the departed time, and notes every unseen and silent variation of the mind, which, like the song of the linnet, "now is gay" because her little ones are safe,

And now is sad, her note is changed,
Because her brood is stolen away,

or like the blind man in his chair beating out the measure of time with the absorption of the unseeing. "Whose inner day can never die, whose night of loss is always there."

The young man whose death made his friend capable of this strange insight into all the ways of sorrow, Arthur Hallam, was himself little more than a hope unfulfilled. His pathetic little *Remains* do not even seem to convey to the reader the promise which all his youthful circle saw in him, a conclusion not by any means unusual; yet in inspiring and making possible this great poem he has had an unusual fate.

The *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* which was published impressively on the

morning of one of the most imposing public ceremonies of the age, the burial of that great chief by his country with mournful congress and adhesion of all classes, was Mr. Tennyson's first service in his office of Laureate. It is perhaps the finest of the odes on public events which have from time to time stirred the heart of the nation, rolling forth its muffled drum, sounding its great peal of lamentation in a strain that is worthy of a national mourning. The grandeur yet self-restraint and simplicity of the great verse, like the subject : the dramatic yet solemn question—

Who is he that cometh ?

the grave beauty of the answer—

Mighty Seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea,

and the repeated proclamation of noble duty as higher than glory, embody everything that fame could say. And then arises the assurance—

Whatever record leap to light
He never shall be shamed,

and the burst of

Honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
Eternal honour to his name. . . .

The sound "of the mourning of a mighty nation" was never more nobly set forth.

This great poem is, however, perhaps less

universally popular than *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, which soon after gave to one of the most tragic incidents of the Crimean War a poetical immortality such as seldom arises on the immediate stroke of any great feat of arms. The minstrel strain is changed : it has not the amplification or the detail of classic times : but still it strikes like a trumpet note across the calm levels of life, and gives to valour its meed as in Homeric days. One curious nineteenth-century difference—if we may yield so much to fashion as to ascribe to abstract motive what was demanded by the character of the event—is that it is no chief or leader, but the nameless, heroic, common duty which took no time to inquire whether “some one had blundered” which is here celebrated before earth and heaven. From Homer to Scott it had been the Man who was the theme : here it was the men, the nameless workers out of a rash meaning not their own.

The next production of Tennyson’s genius was also pervaded by the spirit of the war time : the idea suddenly revealed to an age which had sunk into the apathy of physical well-being, of certain high advantages to the commonweal of the forcible disruption of the ties of peace—a strange thought for the first half of the nineteenth century which had plumed itself on a wisdom superior to its predecessors and believed itself to have beaten the old swords into pruning-hooks, and attained a

happiness and perfection unexampled in earlier ages. It was the purpose of *Maud* to show with what dull deteriorations and smug mediocrity that complacent peace had been accompanied, and how wholesome was the blast of the trumpet which blew so many cobwebs away, and roused the old manful spirit in the race. This, however, was perhaps too artificial an aim for poetry : and it was the exquisite construction of the little drama, the wonderful picture it gave of a young man's love, and the still more exquisite songs with which it was threaded through which secured its instant acceptance by all readers. The intoxication of that climax of youthful feeling, the visionary adoration, "There is none like her, none," the paths that grow rosy under her feet, the *Vita Nuova* which uplifts both above the earth, floating them upward into a paradise of imagination and feeling, has never been more exquisitely expressed. It is less impassioned than Romeo with Juliet, less dreamy than Dante with Beatrice, yet we may venture to place it in its lesser perfection beside these two, in kind if not in degree, which is the greatest thing that can be said for any poem. There are drawbacks in the long soliloquies of the hero's madness, and his commentaries on contemporary subjects sometimes jar upon the ear : but the heart and centre of the poem, the love tale, is above all words of praise.

It is as delicate and perfect in art as was the prose romance of *Esmond*, which had appeared a few years before. There is of course no other analogy between these two works.

Three years later Mr. Tennyson began the publication of his *Idylls of the King*. He had already indeed given a foretaste of that section of his work in the *Morte d'Arthur*, published in one of his early volumes. The first series of these contained the lovely romance of Elaine, the protracted but beautiful story of Enid and Geraint: and the one marked and notable study of evil—very modern and nineteenth-century corruption in the midst of the heroic age of romance—which is the theme in *Vivien*: beside the central thread of the great tale, the wonderful poetic conception of Lancelot and that "faith unfaithful" which made him "falsely true," the great figures of the blameless king and the majestic Guinevere. This first volume was the most powerful, and has remained the most popular of the series. Amid the wonderful group, around whom and whose story all other interests centre, and whose sway and influence are the inspiration of the whole, Lancelot stands forth as the one distinct creation which our poet's noble genius has given to the world. The blameless king is not sufficiently individualised to count in this way. Perfection of character has always indeed the

drawback that it is difficult to identify and fix it upon the human imagination. The conception of Guinevere can scarcely be said to be original at all. She is a woman of grand proportions, but no individual distinction. The sweet Elaine is a vision of youth and love and the visionary impatience of despair. Enid is a womanly shadow of the too much patience of the mediæval ideal, like Griselda. Lancelot alone has added a living and most notable being to the world, the very perfect gentle knight of Chaucer, with the tragic soul in him of a guilt which is against all his perfection, yet part of it, contrary to every tradition of his nature yet its chief motive and feature—adding at once the complications which the modern mind demands, and a deep and terrible principle of humanity to the ideal. The noble spirit overborne by this shadow, never able to escape from it, his honour rooted in dishonour, is one of the most wonderful attempts of poetry to realise the highest imagination. It is not so lofty, nor so elevated as Hamlet, whose great soul has no such clog ; and yet the romance and tragedy of that burden attracts many minds even more. The character of Lancelot and the poems which are devoted to him, or in which he appears, mark the highest point of Lord Tennyson's poetry—whose genius, however, must be allowed to be not dramatic in any Shakespearian sense. Yet there

is something as masterly and fine in the remarkable power of construction, as distinct from creation, which links these poems together, showing how Arthur's throne was established and flourished in purity, and how the unnoted evil crept in, till by degrees all was resolved again into the elements—which belongs to the highest region of poetic art.

The little rift within the lute
That by and by will make the music mute

is revealed to us with consummate skill ; and all the lesser histories which the reader found so much less attractive than the first, are by degrees perceived to be so by the intention and self-denial of the artist, whose purpose was not to enchant the world with ever a new tale more perfect than the last, but to show how the pure atmosphere of the ideal kingdom was disturbed, its unity broken, and the nobler meaning stolen away. As this disintegration goes on, we are slowly brought to see how the chivalrous rule of redressing wrong and protecting the weak was no longer enough for the self-convicted warriors, whose wild quest of the Holy Grail was but the climax of their previous wanderings : though this time it was a desperate desire to save themselves from moral destruction by a miraculous agency, and not the divergence of individual passion and sin which led them away. The final destruction of Arthur's

kingdom which followed upon that last effort after something better than possible life (although full of noble individual traits, such as the honest devotion of the good Sir Bors, whose object was to save Lancelot rather than to gain privileges for himself), is a truth perhaps too subtle for the ordinary reader, especially for one who takes the *Idylls* individually instead of as a whole; but it is the very soul of the great design. The dates of the publications of this great series are, *Idylls of the King*, 1858; *Holy Grail*, 1869; *Gareth and Lynette*, 1872. Interposed between came the poems of *Enoch Arden* and *Aylmer's Field*, 1864; the *Lover's Tale*, a work of youth, 1879; and finally in 1886 the *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After*, which gives us the sustained and harmonious thoughts of age upon the theme of youth, and is full of a chastened beauty: and the brief collection of poems published under the title of *Demeter* in 1890, which would seem to have included the parting song of the poet, were it not that as we write still later productions are being given to the world. That last touch of autobiography, so to speak, the last lyric of personal feeling which we have had from our poet's hand, has not, however, been superseded, and is so exquisite as to form a fitting close to his long career of stainless work and life.

It has been the privilege of our age to have two contemporary poets, both of the highest class,

extremely different in everything but greatness, as it has also been its privilege to possess two novelists of unusual powers whose names must always be linked together in every record of the Victorian age. Tennyson and Browning are the twin names, which rise to every lip together, though it would be difficult to think of any two men whose genius was more unlike. The verse of Lord Tennyson is always a clear-flowing stream, pellucid and full of melody, rising into sonorous grandeur, falling into the most harmonious cadences, music-learned, and suave and noble, the utterance at once of a scholar and of one of the sweetest voices of nature. Sweetness is nowhere characteristic of Browning's rugged and much interrupted yet vigorous and often splendid strain. He does not concern himself with its effect upon the ear, but pours forth his great verse with a freedom from all bondage, either of the rules of poetry, or the instinctive preference of nature for melodious utterance, which sometimes has at first the effect of discouraging or even disgusting ears accustomed to the classic cadences of earlier poetry. That the reader soon becomes accustomed to that halting and broken measure, and that its strange power of expressing the equally broken and irregular courses of human thought and passion is wonderful, exceeding with a sort of Gothic force and richness the serener

chastened beauty of classic inspiration, is equally true : but there must always remain some who are unable to surmount the first impression, and to whom Robert Browning will always remain the veiled philosopher of Sordello rather than the poet of Men and Women, the Seer whose divination penetrates the delicate heart of the child-martyr Pompilia as well as of the saintly old Pope, and the mediæval ruffian—the man who has revealed to us so many corners of the human heart, and followed so many lines of subtle thought to their fountain-head. The profound and tender reflections of *In Memoriam*, those soundings of the depths of sorrow and all its wandering thoughts, have no place in Mr. Browning's poetry. It is his, not to console us by the company of his own brother soul, wistfully interrogating the problems which are to him as to us the first questions in life, as they are its last mysteries ; but to descend with his keen lantern into the being of another and another fellow-creature, revealing how the subtle currents flow, how the strange inspirations rise, how men work out their astonishing story, each for himself, in a wonderful darkling world of impulse and motive undiscovered by any shining of the sun. To Tennyson the romantic, the mystic, the stories of love and death, the thoughts that search for the lost through earth and heaven, the ideal in all its grace, the empire

of imagination over all the world : but to Browning the caverns and subterranean halls of an inner universe, the exploration of those runlets of secret meaning which water the earth, the mind within which gives to all outward action its significance and force. The French writers in their day made their world ring with the distinction between the romantic and classic schools of art, a tiresome controversy, chiefly about words ; but the distinction between our two great poets is more curious, more interesting than any such artificial classification. The one within, the other without, they have worked together as few brothers-in-arms have ever done at the exposition of mankind to man, the first Science in the world, the most curious, the most majestic, to which no science of the generation of fishes, no theory of rocks and stones, no reconstruction of skeletons or siftings of cosmic dust and rubbish, can ever be compared.

Robert Browning was born in 1812, a few years younger than Lord Tennyson and than his own poet-wife, and was brought up in a *milieu* and with associations very different from those of the rural gentry and University-bred companions among whom Lord Tennyson's early days were passed. If it mattered what these antecedents were, he was of the class which the French call the *haute bourgeoisie*, a title which has no synonym in English, unless it were the vague term middle

class, which has much varied in meaning since the beginning of the century. It then included professional men of all classes, and the greater part of a more or less educated public, not absolutely included in the "nobility and gentry" of more formal nomenclature: now it is not supposed to ascend above the higher kind of shopkeepers, a limit which no doubt includes many well-educated and altogether worthy persons—but to this class Mr. Browning certainly did not belong. His first poem, *Pauline*, was published before he had completed his twenty-first year, in 1833; his second, *Paracelsus*, in 1835; *Sordello* followed in 1840. An intelligent critic in *Tait's Magazine*, then an important organ of literary opinion, spoke of the first as "a piece of pure bewilderment," which is indeed the verdict which the world in general has passed upon all those early poems, with a faint reserve perhaps in favour of *Paracelsus*. We need not enter into any criticism of these works. It has been, we think, the mistaken aim of the special worshippers of the poet to pour interpretations and explanations, especially of *Sordello*, upon the world. It does not seem the least likely that these will ever be successful. There will no doubt always remain some who like Coleridge's wedding guest are chosen from the beginning of time to understand and appreciate, and to these we may safely leave them.

After that discouraging preface Browning became really but slowly known to the world in the series of works at first entitled *Bells and Pomegranates*, which began with the little lyrical drama of *Pippa Passes*, and included a great many of his finest works. When the public began to understand what he meant, which indeed was not for a long time, it turned its ear very completely to the poet, although it still doubted its own comprehension of him years after comprehension had been altogether within its reach. There were always enthusiastic admirers at all times: and his name had weight and a sort of alarmed respect attached to it, long before the tardy applauses came. The *Bells and Pomegranates*, in which many very fine poems were printed, appeared at intervals from 1841 to 1846, but it was not till 1855 when *Men and Women* was published that the balance actually turned. These wonderful poems might still afford a roughness here and there, a measure broken by the very wealth of metaphor and thought in which the poet's mind luxuriated: but they could not longer be kept back, even by a thousand parentheses and digressions, from the common intelligence which by this time also had been trained to receive them. From that period at least, if not before, the name of Browning assumed its place by the side of Tennyson, and the question which of the two was

greater was one not always given on the side of the more quickly acknowledged and better known poet.

It is only perhaps in an age which affords a certain balance to the abstract force of science, which is its chief preoccupation, by a keen interest in human character, the age of the biographer and personal historian, that these poems would have been fully felt and understood. It is some compensation for the predominance of the physical, which evolution would fain make all in all, that the development of human character, a thing so unaccountable and so little capable of being measured and classified—notwithstanding the fashionable and feeble creed of heredity which is so fallacious and inconclusive—should be the object of so much eager curiosity and thought. Browning's power of entering into the mind of his subject of the moment, of disclosing the unsuspected turns of thought, the twists of moral sentiment, the wonderful way in which each man accounts for and justifies—even while sometimes accusing—himself, is almost unique in poetic conception. There is much noble poetical description—in which chiefly the art of Lord Tennyson consists—and there is the dramatic power of representing human creatures in action which both these poets possess in some degree ; but the separate gift of working out character, passion, and life, in the inner operations of the mind itself,

is the peculiar possession of Browning—showing the very spring and motive of human existence, the secret wheels which regulate the motions of humanity. The mournful self-revelation of the painter Andrea, so full of the sentiment of better things, so unable to overcome the conscious weakness of nature; the deadly calm of intellectual life moving blindly yet with a melancholy dignity against the dark curtains of mystery which close in the world around them, in Cleon—and sharpened with the keen touch of dawning science, in Karshish; the sensuous enjoyment of life, yet sense of beauty and natural truth which light up the levity of the careless reveller in the mediæval monk Lippo, are each in itself perfect realisations of individual consciousness and meaning, the philosopher not less true than the musing poet or the rosy friar. Down even to the ecclesiastical man of the world in Bishop Blougram, and the still profounder depths of the shrewd and vulgarly subtle medium Sludge, the poet-philosopher goes with his lantern lighting up the strange world that is beneath. They all account for themselves, fit themselves into their wonderful theories of the world, justify their being with an art that is unquestionable, which fulfils one of the highest requirements of life by permitting, nay forcing us, to put ourselves in the place of each. That large understanding of men which in its supreme degree

is the root of the compassion and loving-kindness of God, thus—in a finite measure, yet partaking of the infinite as only genius and love can do—opens up to us the secret heart and kernel of the world.

In a still higher degree this power was manifested in the extraordinary pictures of the *Ring and the Book*. There a group of persons perform before us a great drama in which the primeval forces of good and evil, love and hatred are set forth in the most novel and powerful way. It is not such a drama as could be placed on any stage, where the familiar skill of the actor might embody for us in broad lines some open secret of story, some certain combination of limited events—showing how a middle-aged husband, jealous of his child-wife, goaded her innocent soul with tyrannies and perversities until she fled from him under the care of a chivalrous priest, a young man with motives so easy to misconstrue, so difficult for the vulgar mind to understand. Such a story, not over new, might easily be made into a play, especially if priest and lady were allowed to be actuated by the old *motif*, and passion, so called, triumph over their sorrow and innocence. Browning's method was very different from this. His story, it may be said, is told with leaps and jerks in the version of one after another, telling it over and over, the most cumbrous, if often the most impressive way. In point of fact we have not

the mere story, but each soul's statement of its case and of the private world of motive and meaning in which it lives and forms its purposes, and from which its actions come forth, like the ear of corn from the teeming soil. The reader is placed upon the judgment-seat while each pleads before him for life or death, the black soul of Guido revealing all its convolutions to the light of day, the noble Caponsacchi, indignant in white light of manhood and knighthood and generous succour, the timid yet heroic woman in extreme youth, subjection and humility, yet high revolt when the point is touched beyond which submission becomes a treachery and cowardice. The work is unique in poetry. It is as powerful in treatment as it is novel in form ; the secondary figures in the long plea of accusation and defence, the hum of life around them in all its inquiries and partisanship, the tribunal itself, the aged Pope who holds the scales of justice, are all placed before us in full potency of life and thought. No man, in English or any other speech, has mounted to the heights of Shakespeare ; but in its wonderful way the *Ring and the Book* stands on an eminence of its own, almost equally inapproachable. Its faults—the faults of its conception and very essence, a necessity of its being—are its extreme length and the great strain which notwithstanding that length its great

concentration and intensity demand ; but it is a poor criticism which thinks of faults in presence of such a creation, the addition as of a new planet flaming in life and truth, among the stars that already shed over us those rays that rule the night, attending the dawn and revelation of a brighter day.

When all is said that can be said about the greater works of a poet's life it remains the fact that by far the greater majority of readers prefer him in his shorter poems, and that the widest circle of fame is that which rests upon the lyrics, the briefer breathings of poetry, the swallow flights as Lord Tennyson calls them. *In Memoriam*, as we have noted, is but a collection of these, though so wonderfully threaded together, and instinct with an inspiration, which the careless reader may miss or overlook, yet still receive into his heart of hearts a bit of melody, a fragment of verse which will last him all his life. If it was not for the innumerable dew-droppings of such verses the number would be few who would pursue Shelley through the long-drawn stanzas and fantastic meaning of *Alastor* or the *Revolt of Islam*, and even Wordsworth, the grave and great, would be apt to lose a great many of his worshippers if he met us only on the vast mountain-sides and valleys of the *Excursion* and *Prelude*. Lord Tennyson and Mr. Browning have happily both given us enough of these shorter strains to satisfy

the multitude. For three readers of the *Ring and the Book* there are perhaps a thousand who have galloped to Ghent upon that most impossible and unnecessary journey, and felt a lump rise in their throats when the good steed Roland fell in the market-place ; or attended the pied Piper and his train in their disastrous pilgrimage into the unknown.

Of Mr. Browning's publications after his great work there is comparatively little to say, though they are many in number. *Balaustion's Adventure*, with its wonderful translation—with a modern light—into English, and all the nineteenth-century thought suggested over the shoulder, as it were, of the Greek wife and martyr, was published in 1871, and was soon followed by *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau, Fifine at the Fair*, 1872 ; *Red Cotton Nightcap Country*, 1873 ; *Aristophanes' Apology*, the *Agamemnon*, the *Inn Album*, *La Saisiaz*, *Pacchiarotto*, *Jocoseria*, *Ferishtah's Fancies*, *Parleyings with certain People of Importance*, at intervals during the next dozen years. The *Dramatic Idylls* came in the middle of this long series in 1879 and 1880, the only volumes among them fully worthy of the poet's name. In these later works he returned in a considerable degree to the more involved expression and obscure significance of his earliest works. Obscure significance we say—because much meaning was there, though

often hard to follow out. His last work of all, a collection of poems, unequal yet full of many fine things, to which he had given the fond title *Asolando* (as if Asolo, his favourite little Venetian city, had been a verb of poetic meaning, and he the actor of all that mingled thought and story in an ever present tense), was published on the very eve of his death—the news that his own country had eagerly received that last offering of his genius, being almost the last which his dying ears received. Thus poetry so early taken up, so continuously served, was with him till the last moment of his life. He died on the 12th December 1889 in the Palazzo Rezzonico in Venice, the home of his only son, with all who were most dear to him around his bed.

It might have been a question in chronology whether the other poet whose name is for ever linked with that of Robert Browning, the first of women-poets in her own race, perhaps in the world, should not have come before him in the record, the beginning of her work preceding his by a few years, and the end of it by many. But it seemed undesirable to separate the great Twin Brethren of our generation from each other. Why it is that no woman—except in fiction—ever attains the highest rank in poetical literature it is probably quite impossible to determine. There are many lines of limitation which the higher

sense of the world, as well as its prejudices, prefers that a woman should not overstep, questions that it is best for all the interests of the race that she should not handle—which may have something to do with this inferiority; but great genius breaks all bonds, and these limitations are less and less respected as the world goes on. No such superlative genius has ever yet, so far as we know, been put into a woman's being—and it is in itself a confession of a lower level when we say that Mrs. Browning is the first of women-poets. In herself she is a person full of interest, with a story of subdued romance, and a nature full of poetical qualities, much more poet than her husband though her poems are much less poetry, which is a paradox of which no explanation can be afforded. A wonderful girl, educated as few girls were, with all the classic inspirations that come from the poetry of the Greeks, she began to write at an extraordinarily early age, translating the *Prometheus* of Æschylus, and even venturing into philosophy with a youthful Essay on Mind, while still so young that Miss Mitford had "some difficulty in persuading a friend" that the young author "was old enough to be introduced into company, in technical language was *out*." Elizabeth Barrett, this miraculous child, was early stricken down by illness and sorrow, and for many years had all the appearance of a confirmed

invalid shut up in her room for life. It was from her sickroom that her first collection of poems, including many of her finest productions, came forth in 1844. In these—among many reminiscences and inspirations of her then singular education—poems of which “Pan is Dead” is much the most remarkable—there burst forth also the voice of her time, the voice of the enthusiast and philanthropist, which scarcely had become before one of the highest voices of poetry. The “Cry of the Children,” which was included in these first volumes, has a passion and pathos with which the soul of England was wrung, and formed at once the highest expression and stimulus of a great wave of popular feeling, very curious to find side by side with the half-triumphant, half-regretful proclamation of the Gods of Hellas, whose doom had gone forth from among the spheres.

One of the longest of Miss Barrett’s poems, a poetical narrative hurriedly written, but full of picturesque life and power, has a curious and interesting reference to the other poet, unknown to her as yet, in whose name her own was to be merged, the future companion of her life. Browning’s *Bells and Pomegranates* were in course of publication when this young lady rushed with flying pen through the tale of *Lady Geraldine’s Courtship*, describing her, the high-born lady in her old hereditary home, surrounded by every-

thing that was best and most beautiful, enjoying all the highest luxuries of life, sometimes ancient, sometimes modern, the old poets and the new,—among which latter class there might be for her refreshment :

Of Browning one pomegranate, which when cut down
through the middle
Showed a heart within blood-tinctured, with a veined
humanity.

Not so much this touch of anticipated acquaintance, but the possession of a mutual friend anxious to secure a moment's pleasure for the invalid, brought these two together. She was on the sofa from which she could scarcely rise, from whence she apostrophises so prettily and touchingly the spaniel Flush who was her devoted attendant—and herself not unlike that wistful affectionate creature, with long curls half veiling her face, after the romantic fashion of the time, when the robust young poet in the flush of his manhood and strength was introduced into her darkened room. He brought romance and all the glories of awakening life with him into that retirement, from whence a little while after he stole his wife, restoring her almost by a miracle to comparative health and the open-air world, and a young woman's natural capacity for enjoyment. The marriage was not only opposed, but forbidden by her family, notwithstanding that

residence abroad had been declared to be her only chance of life and restoration. Love which thus came unexpected, a little tardy, but all the more wonderful and sweet into her seclusion, awakened in her a fountain of poetry more personal than anything that had gone before. The Gods of Hellas gave place to a more potent influence, and the course of her own singular courtship pushed aside all the Lady Geraldines of so much more commonplace an inspiration. Nothing prettier can be than the little glimpse into the tremulous newly awakened hopes of the invalid which is afforded to us when she describes herself as stepping breathlessly and furtively out of the carriage in which she was taking the daily drive of routine, to stand for a moment on the grass, and feel herself upon her feet in a tremulous ecstasy of new being. In a higher sense, we have the same sensation in those *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, tenderly veiled in the transparent mist of supposed translation, where this awakening to life and love is shadowed forth. These sonnets mark the highest poetic tide of her genius, the modest *abandon* of a heart overflowing with tenderness, and that surprise of delight as of the primal creation, which the true poet finds in each new thing that meets his sight and experience—but still more strongly in what was almost, in this particular case, a resurrection from the dead.

Mrs. Browning's poems after her marriage were longer and of more importance so far as purpose and intention went. "Casa Guidi Windows" is an expression of her interest in the advancing cause of Italian independence, for which she had the most passionate sympathy. The force of contemporary feeling which is poured forth in this poem, and also in the *Poems before Congress* — which made them especially striking at the moment, is naturally rather to their disadvantage now when all these agitations are happily overpast, and the inexperienced observer begins to wonder whether it can be possible that Italian Unity is so new as to have been the object of such warm, impassioned, almost despairing, desires so short a time ago. That it should have been only the Austrian uniform which was visible from Casa Guidi windows, where now the lively Bersaglieri pass daily at their running trot, so familiar, so completely a part of the scene—is all but incredible, or that the heart of an English lady there should have swelled so full of alarm and indignation and fear lest some disastrous compromise should cut the wings of her beloved adopted country. These poems must ever have an interest for the historical student as showing what that period of agitation, fear and hope really was.

The last great work of Mrs. Browning's life

was the poem of *Aurora Leigh* published in 1856—the most complete monument perhaps of her genius. The remarkable thing in this work is its energy and strong poetical vitality, the rush and spring of life which is in a narrative, often lengthy, and of which the subject and story are not sufficient for the fervour and power of utterance. The development of the woman-poet brought from a wild no-training among the Italian hills into a prim English feminine household, and inevitably assuming there that attitude of superiority to everything about her which is so contrary to that of true genius, and so melancholy a mistake in art—gives the reader at first a strong prepossession against, instead of in favour of, the young Aurora, so conscious as she is of her higher qualities among the limited persons and things about her. The story, however, soon plunges, in the person of its hero, into those wild depths of philanthropy and sublime intention towards the poor and miserable, which to all sober eyes tend the way of madness. Romney's conclusion that it is his duty to marry the unfortunate Marian Erle who was the victim of brutal passion, thus showing how divine pity transcends all other forces, and that the innocent in will and intention can never be sullied—notwithstanding the fact that he does not love her, that indeed he loves another woman conventionally

suitable to him in every respect, is the climax of the tale; in which something of that perverse sense of duty in plunging into the most horrible depths, which is the natural balance of those limitations which the world imposes or endeavours to impose on women, is apparent through the indignant denunciations of too prevalent evil, and recognition of much belied and unacknowledged good. There are many admirable pieces of description and bursts of feeling in this poem, but it is throughout a little rhetorical, and its great quality is, as we have said, the remarkable sustained energy and vitality of the long volume of verse.

This "moon of poets," as she is beautifully called in the exquisite dedication to her of Browning's *Men and Women*, lived for fifteen years after her marriage in tolerable enjoyment of life, under the united influence of her husband's tender and unceasing care, and the genial climate of Italy, the country with which she so much identified herself, that the great calamity suffered by that nation in the death of Count Cavour is said to have hastened her death, which took place in Florence in 1861.

Nothing has been said about what is no unimportant part of the work both of Lord Tennyson and Mr. Browning, their plays. These, there is no doubt in both cases, it will be

attempted to play spasmodically, or when their special enthusiasts find a chance, from time to time ; but they will not, we think, ever find any general acceptance on the stage : where whatever may have been the case in elder days, it is not poetry that is wanted, but nimble action and a system of events skilfully and closely constructed to suit certain practical needs. *Strafford*, Mr. Browning's earliest drama, was indeed produced by Macready, and secured a limited and moderate success, but was not brought forward again. The *Blot in the 'Scutcheon* was promised, but never got to the stage at all. *Colombe's Birthday*, a beautiful little dramatic sketch, has been played we believe by amateurs, and for those who love both the drama and the poet it would be difficult to imagine a more worthy exercise ; but that also is too delicate for the bustling stage. Lord Tennyson's smaller plays have been produced with more decided, yet never with lasting success. The *Falcon*, as performed by Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, was one of the most poetical and delightful performances ever seen in a theatre, but it was caviare to the general ; and the *Cup*, though gorgeously produced by Mr. Irving, the actor most used to have his own way with the public, was also a short-lived play. Of the longer dramas, *Harold* and *Queen Mary* have had no better fate. The

Promise of May fared even worse with the public, and the last production of the old poet's unwearying genius—the *Foresters*—though it has met with many literary applauses, has found only an American actor and audience bold enough to produce and appreciate it—the latter a fact somewhat disgraceful to the mother nation. It is enough perhaps—might not one believe almost the best?—to be content with the great world of readers, who require no footlights, no artificial excitement of representation to hold them spell-bound to every utterance of the poet's own unaided tongue.

No one will object to the chronological rule which places the kindly and beloved name of Thomas Hood next to these masters of song ; not indeed that he was a master of song in the full sense of the word, but because "the heart within blood-tinctured, with a veined humanity" was never shown with less ostentation and more effect than in the two remarkable poems which early in the age of Victoria suddenly penetrated, as with the swift arrow of its ancient national warfare, the mind of the people. Philanthropy has done and said much in our day. A hundred professions of the desire to set all right, and conviction that this or that was the way to do it, have been published among us, and several notable

writers have found in the attempt to call attention to a great abuse, or advocate a scheme of relief, the materials for their best work, and unlimited praise and reward therewith. But no such motive or object could ever be supposed to have been in the mind of Tom Hood when he darted forth, out of the overwhelming pity of his heart, without logic or practical aim, the two poems without which now any collection of English poetry would be incomplete, the "Song of the Shirt" and the "Bridge of Sighs": in which the poor seamstress and the poorer miserable creature from the streets, the shame of society and of humanity, had such an elegy of heartrending pity and tenderness poured over them as filled the world with compunction and with tears. There was little that was didactic or practical in these famous songs of sorrow. Not his was the mission of teaching or the hand to build up reformatory institutions. He fulfilled the true office of poetry in giving vent to that boundless sympathy with suffering, and remorseful horror of having any share in the system which makes it possible—which has become in our days the warmest sentiment of the common mind, little as even that has been able to do for the long-established evils which mock reformation, or for those human incapacities and weaknesses which force so many struggling creatures downward to the lowest

hopeless depths of worthless labour and starvation. Hood's poems did more perhaps to awaken the national heart than the most appalling statistics could have done, more a hundred times than recent attempts to make capital of vice and feed the impure imagination, and gather profit from a vile curiosity, ever could accomplish. That dreadful image of the drowned creature, "fashioned so slenderly," taken out of the tragic river with who could tell what piteous past behind her, and no refuge but the dark and awful tide sweeping between its black banks, has been impressed for ever on the imagination, intolerable yet perfect, in the tragedy of its voiceless despair.

Hood had the most curiously different reputation behind him when he wrote those two wonderful ballads, if we can call them by so innocent and pleasant a name. He was the jester of his generation, the punster, the maker-up of comic verses, so comical in their showers of fun and easy wit that the most serious of critics could not refuse to be amused, and had not the heart to find fault. The laugh, as so often, came out of a sad life overwhelmed with sickness and care and an unending struggle, but it was too genuine to be assumed, and still rings true with all its twinkling fun and irrestrainable easy delight in the ridicules of circumstance. It was he who

sung of the wet day through which

One small parasol goes weeping home from school
In company with six small scholars.

And yet again, in how different a tone, of the
vigil by a deathbed—

We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

Thus he touched the key of the easiest tender humour, and of a sorrow beyond tears—of tragic and heartrending pain, and of laughing ridicule and trivial wit, like a merry-andrew one moment, and in another almost a prophet. In addition to these extraordinary varieties of production he had the gentle heart which is not always given along with the greatest genius, and has left a trace of love behind him, so that even the severest historian could scarcely mention Tom Hood without a softening in his tones. He was born in 1789 and died in 1845 in poverty and trouble—which indeed had been much the complexion of his life of wit and laughter all through.

Winthrop Mackworth Praed, though a very different man and of antecedents so strongly contrasted that we might almost say they represented the antipodes of social life, had so much affinity with one side of Hood's poetry that his own was entirely humorous, bright with the sparkle of wit and a perception of the comic side of society and nature. He died a young man in 1859 in the

midst of everything that was most prosperous and successful. His poems were collected and republished out of the various periodicals to which they had been contributed, only in 1864. He is chiefly remembered, we fear, as the author of several very clever charades in graceful verse which exercised the ingenuity of his contemporaries, and are, it is needless to say, very superior to the natural level of such productions.

It would seem scarcely necessary to do more than give the names of such graceful and delightful minor poets as Bryan Proctor (Barry Cornwall) and his daughter Adelaide Proctor ; R. H. Horne, the author of *Orion*, a friend and esteemed correspondent of Mrs. Browning ; Alaric Alexander Watts, despite his terrible baptismal name, a gentle and genial singer ; Charles Swain and Charles Mackay, the authors of many popular lyrics ; the Rev. John Moultrie, who was Rector of Rugby during Dr. Arnold's reign, and his faithful friend and supporter, chiefly known by a touching poem of the elegiac order called *My Brother's Grave* ; and D. M. Moir, the Delta of *Blackwood*, whose most memorable verses were of the same order, domestic elegies on the deaths of his children. Lord Houghton (Richard Monckton Milnes) perhaps demands a longer notice, if not for the value of his poetry, which includes many popular verses, at least for his loving-kindness to many of

the less prosperous of his brother poets, and the considerable place he took in society, as a sort of representative of the literary world. He was the friend of Carlyle, of Lord Tennyson, of every one known in literature, exerting himself as much as was possible for the soothing of the latter days of Hood, and well known for his extreme kindness to the impracticable young Scot, David Gray, who offered much promise of poetry, but died before that promise was accomplished. These are perhaps his chief claims to the attention of the later reader : but many of his lyrics linger in the hearts of his contemporaries and give expression to much gentle reflection and feeling, which would scarcely fit into the larger lines of poetry more exalted in tone.

Two or three poets of a different kind, to whom the gift of song was full of deadly seriousness, and sometimes of passion, may be also mentioned here. Ebenezer Elliott, called the Corn-Law Rhymer, poured forth many animated verses on the subject of the not very heroic struggle which led to the Repeal of the Corn Laws in 1843, a struggle, however, which moved almost to passion the northern and manufacturing districts of the country—verses which have died a natural death with the occasion that brought them forth. He was, however, a very good specimen of the manly natural representative of the

common people, the backbone of the nation—whose local fame is an advantage to his country, and who, if he does not escape some of the mistakes natural to limited education and horizon, is far above the tragic folly of those who believe that everything that is wrong can be set right, and prosperity and universal good secured by Act of Parliament. He died in 1849, and produced little except the aforesaid rhymes, in Her Majesty's reign. Thomas Cooper (born 1805), of a more intense and impassioned school, published in 1845 a work of some note called the *Purgatory of Suicides*, and has just died (1892), having recently received a tardy acknowledgment of his gifts, in the only way which is possible to the British Government, by a small grant of money. To the same class belongs James Thomson, of a younger generation, born in 1834, who began life as a soldier school-master, and during his service in the army became the friend of Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, afterwards so well known, whose influence had much effect upon his life. The *City of Dreadful Night*, published in 1874, procured him for a time considerable reputation. These untrained but not impotent imaginations which like the temper of Cassius "much enforced yieldeth a single spark" are remarkable illustrations of the power of that gift amid the humblest surroundings to strike forth tragic though broken notes into the poetry of the wealthiest age.

It is difficult to know how to characterise Martin Farquhar Tupper, whose strange productions have perhaps called forth more ridicule and been more largely sold than those of all the rest of our poets put together. His *Proverbial Philosophy* was the most remarkable instance we know of a large assumption, which so imposed for a time upon the rank and file of readers that he was taken on his own estimate as a poet. The tamest and most commonplace sentiments and platitudes, in the form of dull aphorisms, filling a succession of large and dreary volumes, are the last thing we should think of as likely to attract the enthusiasm of the crowd, yet they did so in the most astonishing way ; and it was only the storms of laughter and ridicule which swept over him, from all whose opinion was worth having, that detached from him with some resistance and great unwillingness the devotion of the multitude. Of the countless editions which were produced of his work during the short period of its popularity scarcely any are now to be seen, and it would be curious to inquire what had become of the volumes which lay on so many drawing-room tables, which were presented by anxious friends to good young people, and were held by gentle dulness as a sort of new revelation, in 1852 and the succeeding years. They have disappeared like *les neiges d'antan*, or rather like

the pins which we lose in cartloads and which must surely by this time have formed a metallic crust somewhere under the vestments of the earth.

Several dramatists of lofty aim but moderate success, partly no doubt because of that loftiness of poetic intention, distinguished the early portion of this half-century. Mr. Serjeant Talfourd's *Ion* had attained the honours of the stage just before its beginning, but his later work was less successful. Sir Henry Taylor did not we believe ever attempt to gain these honours. His chief dramatic poem *Philip van Artevelde* has had the good fortune to please the critics, and has been greatly applauded and admired in those circles where applause is the most sweet ; but it cannot be said ever to have caught the general ear. It has not sufficient force either of life or of poetry to secure that wider audience ; yet the place of the author among contemporary poets has always been high, though without this essential basis of fame. His other works *Edwin the Fair*, the *Virgin Widow*, and *St. Clement's Eve* have not we think gained even this *succès d'estime*.

James Sheridan Knowles, though very much less of a poet, nay, scarcely at all to be included in that list, had a real success on the stage, where his plays for many years held an important place. *Virginius*, the *Hunchback*, and the *Love Chase* were the most popular of these works.

The two latter are still occasionally represented, and though they have become old-fashioned have not altogether lost their power, notwithstanding their perfectly artificial and conventional character, and high-flown sentiment. A painful but powerful tragedy in which the poet endeavoured as much as a man of the nineteenth century could to throw himself into the atmosphere of the pre-Shakespearian tragedies, entitled *Death's Jest-Book, or the Fool's Tragedy*, was written some time before by Thomas Lovell Beddoes, a relative of the Edgeworth family. It was published after his death in 1850, but did not make any impression upon the public mind.

A group of poets may here come in who naturally class themselves in a little band, though perhaps it was the voice of a keen and triumphant ridicule which tied the knot most closely, marking them with the title of the Spasmodic School—a title necessarily in some respects unjust, yet impossible to shake off or outlive. The first of these was Mr. Philip James Bailey, the author of *Festus*—a work which gained considerable acceptance among the critics, who at that period still looked with some respect at a work *de grande haleine*, but which was too lengthy, too philosophical and too ornate to claim much of the public attention. Sydney Dobell, whose first publication was made under the name of Sydney Yendys, an anagram of his Christian name—

writing in a very similar strain, produced in 1850 the *Roman*, also a work in which there were many fine passages and which attracted a good deal of notice. In both poets the intensity of sensation aimed at, and the exuberance of style, awoke a counterblast of amused criticism, which it was possible they might have recovered in the moderating influence of experience and years. It happened, however, that a somewhat ludicrous preface introduced another poet of very similar inspiration to the world soon after the appearance of these writers. A popular essayist in Scotland, the Rev. George Gilfillan, who wrote much upon poetry and himself produced a little of no great pretensions, was the author of a series of articles in which he bewailed the absence of poetical inspiration and called upon heaven and earth to yield a new poet to his prayers. These prayers were answered in the most curiously direct manner by the revelation in very humble circumstances of Alexander Smith, a young Scotsman, who was so moved by Mr. Gilfillan's adjurations to all the gods, as to send him a manuscript, afterwards published under the title of a *Life Drama*, and describing the development of a young poet among the most adverse conditions of life; a poem not without considerable merits, but steeped in the purple and gold of poetical metaphor and simile. The critic's cries of triumph and delight

rang through his own country and penetrated to other skies. He had demanded a New Poet, and lo! here he was, revealed in full garland and singing robes as when Minerva came equipped and armed from her sublime parent's head.

The din and clangour of the proclamation aroused attention everywhere, and prepared as much evil as good for the neophyte, who was received by some with ready enthusiasm, but by others with an inclination to smile not less pronounced and ready. For a little while indeed the tide ran full in his favour, and he was admitted without much demur into the circle of contemporary poets. The *Life Drama* was published in 1853, and in the same year Mr. Dobell produced *Balder*, a poem in which the over-decoration of the style, and attempted intensity of effect, were not chastened but rather increased. The combination of these poems and of the ludicrous incidents of Mr. Smith's discovery, so to speak, by the eager critic—caught the fancy of a wicked wit, himself already a master of verse, especially in its more humorous expression. William Edmonstone Aytoun (born 1813, died 1865) was a member of the band of *Blackwood*, always noted for a keen enjoyment of the exercise of satirical criticism. Aytoun had all the traditions of the elder race of poets behind him as well as an unfeigned delight in the demolition of

pretence and the cutting down of intruders into the sacred paths of literature. He did not, according to the time-honoured fiction which describes Keats as having been killed and Wordsworth held back, by articles in the reviews, assail the new poets in the ordinary ways of criticism. The review in *Blackwood's Magazine* which buried them in a humorous explosion was not directed nominally against either *Balder* or the *Life Drama*, but was a review of the supposed dramatic poem of *Firmilian*, which professed to be also an embodiment of a poet's experiences. The utter extravagance of the incidents did not, as the laughing critic expected, immediately betray to the puzzled reader its satirical intention; and the supposed extracts given were so clever that Aytoun was induced to extend it into an actual poem, and to publish it as *Firmilian, a Spasmodic Tragedy*. The verse in many cases was much more vigorous than the serious models which it turned into ridicule, and though the simple-minded public we think never fully understood the joke, being puzzled to understand how anything so good could have been intended as a mere pleasantry, the effect upon the Spasmodic School was overwhelming and final. Mr. Smith, the youngest of the band, indeed attempted another work, *Edwin of Deira*, which was published in 1861, but had no particular effect. In the meantime, however, Mr.

Dobell and Mr. Smith had united in a volume of *Sonnets on the War* (1855), which, produced by and chiming in with the strong popular and national feeling roused by the War in the Crimea, found much greater access to the public approval.

We must add here the name of Aubrey Thomas de Vere (born 1814), the son of Sir Aubrey de Vere, also a poet—one of the most refined and graceful singers of the time, and a representative of Ireland in poetical literature. His first poem—the *Waldenses*—was published in 1842. He has subsequently treated many distinctively Irish subjects, such as *Innisfoil*, 1861; *Irish Odes*, 1869; *Legends of St. Patrick*, 1872, and several others. His verse is always flowing and melodious, with a reminiscence in it of methods more careful and learned than those into which this age has fallen. Edward Fitzgerald (1809-83), a man of much reputation founded on little work, was, in spite of name and origin, English by birth and training. The friend and companion on very equal terms of his greatest contemporaries, the chief thing by which he is known to the public is a translation from the Persian of the *Rubáiyát* of Omar Khayyám. It is difficult to do justice to the reputation of a man so shrouded in wilful obscurity. A volume of letters published since his death has made a piquant addition to the little light previously thrown upon his work and life.

CHAPTER VI

OF CHARLES DICKENS AND WILLIAM MAKE-
PEACE THACKERAY AND OF THE OLDER
NOVELISTS

THE art of fiction at the commencement of our period must be regarded as in a state of transition. The great revolution effected by the *Waverley Novels* was already an accomplished fact, but it had not yet had time to bear its full fruit, and the modern novel, as we understand it, was at best only struggling into existence. A new influence of a different kind had now arisen, the effect of which it is difficult to over-estimate. It may, indeed, be said that Dickens's novels—at least the earlier and more powerful ones—are hardly novels in the ordinary sense of the term, but the effect that they have produced on the fiction, not only of England but of foreign countries also, is singularly widespread. Greater novelists have produced finer works of art, but

hardly any have succeeded in founding so varied and extensive a school of fiction.

Charles Dickens was born in 1812 at Portsea, where his father, who was a clerk in the Navy Pay Office, had his employment in the Portsmouth Dockyard. His early days, however, were spent chiefly at Chatham, to which his father was transferred when little Charles was only four years of age. His childhood was not a happy one, but the Chatham period was the most prosperous part of it; he had some elementary education at a small school kept by a Baptist minister named Giles, whom he always regarded with respect and affection, and the atmosphere of his home was as yet little clouded. In 1821 his father, John Dickens, whose salary had been lowered in consequence of changes in the official system, came to London, where his family occupied a wretched lodging in Camden Town, and lived in straitened circumstances, oppressed by rapidly increasing debts which resulted in another year or so in the arrest and imprisonment of the unhappy head of the household. From this time commenced that miserable existence of struggle and hardship of which much is recorded in *David Copperfield*. The circumstances, of course, were not actually those given in the novel, and a great deal of trouble has been uselessly expended in attempting to identify facts and figures, which Dickens had

purposely altered; but there is still much stern reality underlying the fictitious scenes of the story. There seems no reasonable ground for identifying John Dickens with Mr. Micawber, but the strange shifts to which the Micawber family were put, the visits of the little boy with his precocious knowledge to the pawnbroker's shop, and the scenes of prison life, refer to actual episodes in the history of the Dickens household.

Charles Dickens, as a child, was, however, in reality put to as wretched work as David Copperfield, being employed in a blacking warehouse, in which a cousin of his had an interest, to paste labels on the blacking bottles. At one time he was placed in the window of the shop to do his work there, that all the world might see what a business the firm were doing. After some years of this drudgery, his father, who had taken the benefit of the Act for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors, came out of prison, and being temporarily free of his difficulties, was able to give Charles some education: but the two years which the latter spent at a small Hampstead school do not seem to have had much effect upon him. Such learning as he had, apart from the strange odds and ends of knowledge picked up in the London streets, was chiefly derived from the study of an old collection of novels and tales, in which Fielding and Smollett figured most largely, supplemented in later days

by a course of hard reading at the British Museum. At an early age Dickens was obliged to earn his bread, and became successively a solicitor's clerk and a reporter for the press ; he had even at one time some thoughts of the stage, for which he displayed throughout his life a remarkable aptitude. He was just of age when one evening, with fear and trembling, he dropped into the letter-box of the *Monthly Magazine* his first story, a sketch afterwards entitled *Mr. Minns and his Cousin*, which was reprinted in the *Sketches by Boz*. For timid young writers, doubtful of their own powers, there should be much comfort in the study of this first attempt ; it is encouraging to think that the perpetrator of so atrocious a piece of balderdash lived to create in later days such characters as Dick Swiveller and Mr. Micawber, Sam Weller and Mrs. Gamp. The *Monthly Magazine* accepted this and other sketches, and, though it could not afford to pay for them, gave the young author his first lift in life. He obtained a post as a parliamentary reporter for the *Morning Chronicle* in 1834, and was engaged to contribute sketches to the affiliated *Evening Chronicle*, then conducted by his future father-in-law, George Hogarth. A collection of these papers under the title of *Sketches by Boz*—a *nom de plume* taken from the nickname of a younger brother—was published in 1836 and attracted an attention which appears

to us much above their merits. The same year saw the commencement of a work which gave Dickens at once an acknowledged rank at the head of his profession. The author of *Pickwick* had nothing to fear from the competition of the most eminent writers of the day.

A well-known comic artist of the day, Robert Seymour, had suggested to Messrs. Chapman and Hall a series of humorous pictures, chiefly of incompetent sportsmen, with letterpress to match—and the task of composing the latter was offered to the young author of the *Sketches by Boz*. Dickens refused to accept this arrangement, but agreed to supply comic scenes at his own discretion to be illustrated by such plates as would “arise naturally out of the text.” Seymour only lived to illustrate the first number of the *Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*, but there are traces of his original plan to be found in Mr. Winkle’s various misadventures on horseback and on the ice, with the rooks and with the partridges. For the subsequent illustrations Hablot Browne—better known as “Phiz”—was chosen out of a number of candidates, Thackeray being among the rejected. The first number of the book, which was issued in twenty monthly parts, at once took the public fancy, laying the foundations of a popularity which has never decreased. There is perhaps no book more widely known in the English

language, nor, strangely enough, many which have been received with such fervour on the Continent, though it is intensely national in character. It is, indeed, an almost perfect specimen of the strictly English quality of fun—using English in its very narrowest sense as applying only to that part of Her Majesty's dominions called England—which differs as greatly from the humour of Scotland and Ireland as from French wit or American extravagance. We could quote instances of more genuinely humorous scenes than that of the trial in *Pickwick*, but we cannot think of anything so irresistibly funny. It is hardly high comedy, but neither is it merely farcical; and it has the great qualities of being always good-humoured and hardly ever grotesque.

Another secret of the success of *Pickwick* perhaps is, that it is not in the ordinary sense of the word a novel. There is no continuous story to speak of, only a collection of amusing scenes of high average excellence, though of course containing some that are of inferior merit. Nor do we find in *Pickwick* any real delineation of character, with the exception, perhaps, of the Wellers, who are, however, as little real as they are always amusing. In this respect Dickens undoubtedly improved in his later works, though we do not regard him as having reached at any time any particular eminence as a story-teller. An episode

in a story he could recount with spirit and power, sometimes of the most tragic kind, as in the career of Bill Sikes, before and after the murder of Nancy, in the account of the Gordon riots, and, in a lighter vein, in the Yorkshire school episode in *Nicholas Nickleby*, and some strong passages in the *Tale of Two Cities*. But a larger and more elaborate plot, such as was required in those of his works which more resembled the ordinary novel in form, was not a task suited to his powers. The details become too intricate, the want of a proper sequence in the events often shows itself, and it becomes necessary to have recourse to unnatural *tours de force*—such for instance as the protracted artifice of old Martin Chuzzlewit in playing the part of an imbecile old man to deceive Pecksniff, an expedient repeated in *Our Mutual Friend*—to bring about the catastrophe. Such difficulties as these, however, belong to a later period of Dickens's career.

About the same time Dickens made some attempts at dramatic writing, producing some slight trifles which were acted with tolerable success; but he did not persevere in this branch of literature, though a great many adaptations of his novels appeared on the stage. In 1836 he became the first editor of *Bentley's Miscellany*, to which he contributed his second novel, *Oliver Twist*. This was a story with a purpose, or rather with two

purposes ; the first to expose the working of the Poor Laws, and the second to give a genuine picture of the life of the criminal classes as a kind of antidote to the flavour of romance with which crime was surrounded in such novels as Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard* and Bulwer's *Paul Clifford*. In the latter end he succeeded to a certain extent ; Fagin, the hideous schoolmaster in crime, and the unredeemably brutal Sikes were acknowledged to be genuine pictures of types that did exist in actual life, and they certainly represent crime in its most unvarnished form. With regard to the other object, we fear that, though generations will laugh over Mr. Bumble, they are not likely to think much of the purpose with which he was put before the world. For the rest, while Bumble, Fagin, the Artful Dodger and one or two other characters are as good as they can be, there is a great deal of inferior work in *Oliver Twist* ; the pathos is mawkish as it usually is in Dickens's works, and the absurdly melodramatic story of Oliver's birth, with the machinations of the impossible villain, Monks, little worthy of the author, though he has sinned repeatedly in the same way, and does not seem to have known better, strange as it may seem to say so. We can only say in his defence that it may have been inserted as a concession to the prejudices of novel-readers.

The remainder of his principal works we may

be allowed to name together in order to get a comprehensive glance at their merits and defects. *Nicholas Nickleby* was commenced in 1838 and published in monthly numbers, as were also *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843-44), *Dombey and Son* (1846-48), *David Copperfield* (1849-50), and *Bleak House* (1852-53). An exception to the rule was *Master Humphrey's Clock*, containing the stories of the *Old Curiosity Shop* and *Barnaby Rudge*, together with a padding of many inferior scenes designed to represent the meetings of a sort of club,—which came out in eighty-eight weekly numbers in the years 1840-41. These works are, of course, of varying merit ; but they present so many features of resemblance that it seems natural to treat them together. They are all cast more in the form of an ordinary novel than *Pickwick* or even *Oliver Twist*, but the deficiencies of the plot in every case show, as we have already said, that Dickens was rather burdened by the necessity of adhering to this system. On the other hand, the individual characters in these books are often of the very highest excellence, though we must admit that the best of them are not of a kind that we have often met or expect to meet in real life. Mr. Micawber in *David Copperfield*, Dick Swiveller in the *Old Curiosity Shop* are in our opinion unsurpassed and unsurpassable ; we should have lost much if we had not met in

Nicholas Nickleby with Mr. Squeers and the Crummles company. In *Martin Chuzzlewit*, a work of which, as a whole, we have not so high an opinion, there are several immortal figures, Pecksniff, Mark Tapley, and the unrivalled Mrs. Gamp, with her mythical friend Mrs. Harris. Even in the other books quoted we have a pleased recollection of Captain Cuttle and Mr. Toots, Inspector Buckett, Simon Tappertit and John Willet. These personages light up the scenes with unfailing life and mirth. It is them we seek, not the excitement of story, nor that later fashion of excitement, the analysis of character which certain critics of the present day are so apt to put in the highest place as the object of fiction. Dickens was, fortunately for us, no analyst. He neither anatomises nor explains the amusing and it must be allowed extraordinary persons whom he puts before us. We are compelled even to confess that these are generally very odd people ; but they justify their creation amply by living, acting, and expressing themselves in the drollest and most amusing fashion, under our very eyes. They live not because their author shows us their machinery, but because we are personally acquainted with themselves.

We are free to admit that we have no admiration at all for Dickens's sentimental or pathetic passages ; we are only moved to weariness by

That Smike's unceasing drivellings and those everlasting Nells.

We feel no interest in little Paul Dombey, and the maunderings of Jo leave our withers unwrung. And nothing can be more surprising than to see how the purely conventional survives in the midst of the wonderful new life which Dickens poured into the forms of fiction. Such totally unreal personages as Ralph Nickleby, Sir Mulberry Hawk, Steerforth, Quilp, Mr. Dombey, Sir Leicester Dedlock, etc., various as are their attributes, all agree in this point; they may perhaps have their counterparts in the waters under the earth, but certainly in the other localities mentioned in the second commandment, their like has not been seen.

It is indeed, however, almost exclusively in his comic characters that the genius of Dickens is really displayed. The few exceptions are, we regret to find, chiefly to be found in the criminal class. Bill Sikes, for instance, is a villain to be proud of, and there is a good deal of truth in the repulsive figure of Jonas Chuzzlewit. If we add that there is not much to be said for Dickens's heroes, we must admit that this is a point in which even the greatest have failed. Nicholas Nickleby, however, is a real man, not to say a brother, though he fails considerably towards the end of his history when he, and we, are suddenly introduced

to the walking lady, who is dragged, neck and heels, into the story in order that he may fall in love with her; Martin Chuzzlewit, also, is not without many redeeming faults. The pure and blameless heroines, such as Agnes in *David Copperfield*, when they are not utterly insignificant, are still more completely without interest. One page of the Marchioness is worth all the Kates and Ruths put together. It is an amiable fault to paint virtue in the finest colours, but it is unfortunate when the characters which exemplify it are mere streaks of pure white such as fatigue the eye to rest upon. In this imperfect world we are too apt to desire the variety imparted by a few spots of—perhaps, not black quite—but at least, dark gray. M. Gustave Droz has informed us that the society in paradise is largely composed of excellent bourgeois, who spend their hours of beatific leisure in recounting one to the other “for example of life and instruction of manners” the circumstances preceding and accompanying *mon premier vénier*. In this heaven Dickens’s good people should find a congenial place; and that is a highly desirable consummation for all of us.

An important part of Dickens’s work, and one which sets a new and unhappily popular fashion, much worked since his time, consists of his famous “Christmas Books.” From 1841, when the first

of these, the *Christmas Carol*, appeared, to 1848, when the regular series closed with the *Haunted Man*, these annuals were eagerly looked forward to, and devoured when they did appear, by an appreciative public. To us they seem to have been rather over-estimated, but we must admit to having more sympathy with Mr. Scrooge's opinion of the "humbug" which underlies so much of the exaggerated enthusiasm about Christmas than with his own conversion to the same. This may be thought to disable our judgment on the matter ; yet we should allow the *Christmas Carol* to be a work of genius in its way. The later ones seem to diminish in merit as they go on. The *Chimes* is not so good as the *Carol*, the *Cricket on the Hearth* is inferior to the *Chimes*—the *Cricket*, by the way, was extremely successful on the stage, not less than four adaptations of it being played in London at the same time. Stories of a similar character from his own and other pens continued for a number of years to be published in the Christmas numbers of Dickens's magazines, *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*.

For the career of Dickens as a journalist and periodical writer we have to go back some years. He had contributed from time to time to the newspapers, especially the *Examiner* and the *Morning Chronicle* ; and when the *Daily News* was

started in 1846 Dickens was chosen to be its first editor—a rather hazardous selection. He does not seem to have been a good editor. No doubt, his relations with his staff would be delightfully genial, and his room in the office was a pleasant haunt, much frequented by his friends, but the publisher admitted to one of Dickens's latest biographers that "he was not sure that the work did not sometimes begin after the editor had left!" In a very short time he relinquished the editorial chair, with a sense of delighted emancipation, to his friend John Forster. Magazine literature, which did not make so constant a claim upon him, seems to have been more to his taste, but it was not till 1849 that he found an opening truly congenial to him in the little periodical, which he founded, and called by the not very appropriate name of *Household Words*. This periodical, which gave Dickens a convenient watch-tower from which to set forth his opinions, while free from the incessant strain involved in the editing of a daily paper, was continued till 1858, when a quarrel arose between him and his publishers regarding a statement upon his personal affairs which he had thought fit to put into the magazine. In the beginning of the next year he transferred his name and prestige to another new periodical put forth by a different publisher under the title of *All the Year Round*. In the former periodical had appeared the novel

Hard Times, which contains in the episode of Stephen and Rachel one of the best pieces of serious writing which Dickens ever did. In *All the Year Round* was published the *Tale of Two Cities* (1859), in which some scenes of the French Revolution are introduced in a lively and powerful manner, and which has had a lasting reputation ; and *Great Expectations* (1850), which is chiefly remarkable as containing one exceptionally strong situation worked out with great power and art. Besides these, we have in the later years of Dickens's life his least successful works, *Little Dorrit*, *Our Mutual Friend*, and the unfinished *Edwin Drood*, of none of which it is necessary to speak. He died in 1870. Besides his absolutely literary work, Dickens was much engaged in the later part of his life in giving readings from his own books, which were conducted with equal ability and profit : a practice afterwards followed by other eminent writers, especially by his great contemporary Thackeray. He was indeed specially fitted for such work by his remarkable dramatic powers, often exhibited in theatricals by the private company started by him and his friend Wilkie Collins. " Ah, Mr. Dickens," said a veteran bearer of banners at one of the theatres to him, " if it hadn't been for them books, what an actor you would have made ! " We believe there was no exaggeration in this criticism.

It is certainly not as the greater of the two principal writers of fiction in our period that we have given the priority to Dickens, nor even as the elder. But Dickens, though a year younger than his brilliant rival Thackeray, had won his place in the front ranks of literature at a time when the latter was only amusing the world by sketches and short stories which did not even show any distinct promise of the great works that were to follow. William Makepeace Thackeray was born at Calcutta in 1811, the son of an Indian Civil Servant, and connected on both sides of the house with various departments of the Honourable East India Company's government. Being sent home early, according to custom, he was educated at the Charterhouse and at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he only remained a short time. On leaving Cambridge he migrated to Weimar, and thence to Paris, where he devoted himself to the study of art, which he then intended to take up as a profession. In 1832 he came into his small fortune and set to work to dissipate it as soon as possible. Various incidents in his novels throw a light on the manner in which that fortune disappeared ; some part would seem to have gone in the Bundelcund Banking Company, some found its way to the pockets of Mr. Deuceace, but the greater part was probably expended in the most easy and expeditious of all

ways of losing money, the establishment of a newspaper. Thackeray had already made some small efforts, while at Cambridge, at the kind of infant journalism which finds favour in the eyes of the Universities, of which some scraps have been preserved to us. Nothing, however, seems to be left to show for such a costly venture as the *National Standard*, or its successor, the *Constitutional*. These two journals, if they did nothing else, rendered their proprietor a service of some value, though of that description which, as Dugald Dalgetty says, "excites no benevolence towards the perpetrator." Between them, they ruined Thackeray,—not to mention a harmless, necessary stepfather, whose money seems to have been lost too,—and obliged him to work for his living. He chose literature finally as a profession in preference to art, though he still did something in the latter department by illustrating his own books and those of others.

In 1837 Thackeray got the introduction to *Fraser's Magazine*, which was the first step of his real career. Maginn, the editor, recognised his talent at once, and Thackeray was admitted to that motley society of poets, philosophers and wits whom Maclise's picture represents as assembled at Fraser's house in Regent Street. The first important contribution of the new-comer was the *History of Samuel Titmarsh and the Great*

Hoggarty Diamond, a clever sketch which does not, however, give any particular foretaste of what was to come. The *Yellowplush Papers* which followed were more successful. These were originally intended to be merely occasional satirical papers, but they soon took the form of a story, relating the adventures of James Yellowplush's master, the swindler Deuceace. There is a great deal of power in this disagreeable story ; Deuceace is represented from the very first as the most absolutely unredeemable scoundrel, who not only lives by cheating at cards but robs his accomplices in swindling, yet he is confronted with admirable art by the still deeper and abler villain, his father. It is a record of vice unrelieved carried on through a succession of intrigues and counterplots with an utterly cynical disregard of any but the most sordid motives, and culminating in one of the most awful pictures which we have ever met with. Deuceace has been out-manceuvred by his father in fortune-hunting, and has married the wrong person of two ladies between whom a great inheritance is known to lie, the older rascal having secured the real heiress. The winning pair, driving in the Bois de Boulogne, come upon the losers in the game sitting on a bench in the miserable companionship to which they are doomed, and stop a moment to enjoy their triumph. In impotent rage and despair, the

starving wretch on the bench strikes the poor woman in whom he only sees a useless incumbrance, and the successful cheats in the carriage drive on with shouts of laughter. It is a hideous picture, but one of intense power.

Thackeray had at this early period given a certain proof of the great possibilities within him, but with work of this kind he was not at all likely to attain any measure of popularity. The more comic experiences of Jeames, which are certainly extremely funny, though they never reach the same level of literary ability, were received with greater favour, such as was accorded to the weaker continuation published some years later in *Punch*, which tells of the sudden affluence of Jeames de la Pluche. Among other contributions to *Fraser* were the still more repulsive "Story of Catherine," the "Confessions of George Fitz-Boodle," which we would almost venture to call dull—and the first of his greater works the "Luck of Barry Lyndon: a Romance of the Last Century, by Fitz-Boodle," to quote the title under which the first number appeared in January 1844. The story of Barry Lyndon is again the story of a rogue, who tells his own tale with a cynical honesty, not seeing anything to be ashamed of in the events which he chronicles. This is a truly masterly study; the growth of character from the young Redmond Barry, who is not a badly

disposed boy, through the various corrupting stages of his life ;—as a common soldier in the English and Prussian services, at a time when the atmosphere of a regiment was far worse than anything we can conceive in our day ; as a youthful impostor under circumstances of strong temptation ; as a police spy, a professional gambler, a wealthy man about town in a very wild age, and an Irish landlord with almost absolute power, and responsible to no one,—to the finished ruffian whose excesses and cruelties are calmly set down by his own pen, is gradually mapped out before us in a manner which makes each change for the worse follow almost logically upon the preceding one. In collected editions of Thackeray's works it is common to put *Esmond* and *Barry Lyndon* in the same volume,—an excellent arrangement, as it seems to us, for nothing can bear greater testimony to the extent and versatility of Thackeray's genius than the fact that he could relate, with so profound an insight into the character of each, the lives of two such utterly different men, from their own point of view. It should be added that *Barry Lyndon* is also remarkable as containing some of the first of Thackeray's admirable historical sketches, such as the story of the French mutineer, Blondin, and the episode of the captivity and execution of the faithless Princess of X——.

Meanwhile Thackeray had found other ways

of getting at the public ear, independently of the ministry of *Fraser*. In 1840 he produced his first sketches of travel, under the title of the *Paris Sketch Book*; in 1843 followed the *Irish Sketch Book*, and in 1844 his *Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo*. We would not give a particularly high place to these slight productions, though they contain occasional pieces of great merit. The best known perhaps is the wonderfully descriptive poem of the "White Squall," with all its life and humour and the exquisitely tender touch at the end :—

I thought while day was breaking
My little girls were waking
And smiling and making
A prayer at home for me.

Thackeray also wrote in the *New Monthly Magazine*, and in 1843 became a member of the staff of *Punch* which had been started two years before. His connection with the latter lasted for ten years, being finally broken off in 1854, as he himself says, "on account of Mr. Punch's assaults on the present Emperor of the French nation, whose anger 'Jeames' thought it was unpatriotic to arouse." His most important contributions had been the "Snob Papers," afterwards republished under the title of the *Book of Snobs*. It is difficult to form an accurate judgment of this singular production; taken merely as a piece of humorous

writing it approaches the sublime, but we doubt whether, on the whole, it adds much to Thackeray's reputation. The philosophy of it seems faulty, the judgments are too sweeping; we ourselves have rarely if ever met a human being who is not a snob according to one or other of Thackeray's definitions, and the author himself, judged from his books only, would certainly fall into more than one of his own categories. Anthony Trollope, in the biography of Thackeray—long the only, and a most unsatisfactory one—contributed to Mr. John Morley's *English Men of Letters*, gives a very fair estimate of the unfair condemnations into which he was liable to be led by this excessive sensitiveness on the point of what he called snobbishness. "He saw something," says the biographer, "that was distasteful, and a man instantly became a snob in his estimation. . . .

"The little courtesies of the world and the little discourtesies became snobbish to him. A man could not wear his hat, or carry his umbrella, or mount his horse, without falling into some error of snobbism before his hypercritical eyes. St. Michael would have carried his armour amiss, and St. Cecilia would have been snobbish as she twanged her harp."

The first of Thackeray's great works appeared in 1846. *Vanity Fair* was a very bold attempt. It was published in monthly numbers after the

manner of Dickens, and it was not completed in less than two years. The publishing world had many doubts about it, and it received many rebuffs before being accepted by Messrs. Bradbury and Evans, the publishers of *Punch*. More than this, it introduced into an early number the wildly daring sketch of Sir Pitt Crawley as he appeared in his London house, which Trollope says, "has always been to me a stretch of audacity which I have been unable to understand"—as if formally challenging conventionality and criticism to take up their weapons in time, and slay the book in its youth before it could shock the world yet more. But the world, which is not such a fool as it looks, refused to be shocked, and took Thackeray to its bosom instead. Before *Vanity Fair* was nearly finished, he was already recognised on all hands as one of the very first writers of his day. His popularity from that time was established, and the next few years present an unbroken series of triumphs. *Pendennis*, in monthly numbers, appeared in 1850, and the *Newcomes* in a similar form in 1853-54; *Esmond*, which came before the public at once as a whole, was published between them in 1852. To these may be added the *Virginians*, a sort of sequel to *Esmond*, published in numbers in 1857-59.

The greatest of these, in its immense scope and extraordinary variety of material, is to our

mind the first. *Vanity Fair* has many claims to greatness. It does not depend on any special story,—indeed, there is no particular plot in the book,—nor, in spite of the great prominence given to Becky Sharp, does it depend upon one or two characters only. It is one of the most remarkable satires on English society which has ever appeared; but it is not as a satire alone that it has gained its position as the greatest work of fiction of this period. It is at the same time a moving panorama of life, with a hundred side-scenes and episodes of interest, and with a reality and fulness of humanity which have never been surpassed. The little romances, if they may be called so, of Becky Sharp and Amelia Sedley come to an end at a very early period of the book, but each catastrophe as it is brought about introduces us to another train of incidents, and carries on the endless drama of social existence which never pauses. The deaths of Sir Pitt and Miss Crawley close up avenues of the tale only to open new ones in a different direction. Even the fall of Rebecca is not the end of the exhibition which the showman has to put before us. The whole work, indeed, is very like a show, in which one set of scenes attracts our attention after another, not necessarily connected, but yet falling into a general harmony without break or sharp transition to turn the mind back from its natural course.

The puppets succeed each other so deftly that we hardly can persuade ourselves that the scene has been changed. The long, awkward figure of the Major tumbling over his sword, is still before our eyes when old Sir Pitt blunders on with his pipe, or the Wicked Nobleman comes grinning and posturing to the front. So Thackeray himself would have had it, as, indeed, he says in his preface; and so the work of that unparalleled showman does naturally present itself to us.

Still we must admit that there is one side of the picture or one set of scenes in the show which is rather lacking in interest—we refer, of course, to those which relate to the history of Amelia Sedley. In all those admirable scenes, in which the delicious fooling of the wooing of Jos Sedley is the main incident, she is a charming figure, and we do not regret her absurd devotion to that incarnation of the British snob, George Osborne. But in the later part of her life, when we are called upon to weep over the conventional young widow and look on at a wearisome series of ignoble conflicts with her mother, and the petty details of the Camden Town household to which its poverty fails to impart any interest, our sympathy is no longer aroused. Much better is the figure of Dobbin, but even here we have a sort of conventionality of virtuous character which is not worthy of the company into which it is introduced.

An odd defence of the weakness of the Dobbin and Amelia side of the book has been set up, to the effect that it is the faithfulness of the picture which calls forth our objections. We admire the knaves of the story, because Thackeray drew knaves as they really are, and such pictures are many-sided and attractive ; on the other hand, he drew good people as they are, and we find them colourless and uninteresting, because they really are so. This can only be the view of a shallow and cynical onlooker, never of a wise man like Thackeray, who knew that there is nothing upon earth so nearly approaching greatness as that which is entirely good. What, if such a theory hold good, are we to think of Dr. Primrose, of Parson Adams, or of Thackeray's own Colonel Newcome? Perhaps the real cause of this error consists in the misunderstanding of what is really good. When Cromwell complained of the incapable officers who were appointed solely out of consideration for their good birth, he spoke of such men as being "gentlemen and nothing more" ; but lest men should ask what more there could be, he was careful to add, "I honour a gentleman that is so indeed." It is, in fact, because this negative side of goodness, which is often nothing more than the absence of faults, or as we should say loosely "goodness and nothing more," is presented to us alone, that we prefer the spiced

wines of the naughty Becky to the sugared milk-and-water of Amelia.

It is indeed a curious study to observe the gradual development of Thackeray's "good" characters. At the outset he appears to have regarded himself as chiefly qualified to describe rogues and hypocrites; virtue was not so much in the line of the biographer of Barry Lyndon and Catherine Hayes, the historian of the Deuceace family and of the *Fatal Boots*. But when composing his great attack upon the faults and pretences of English society he became aware that this was a mistaken plan, and that the public, if nothing more, demanded a picture in which both sides should appear. As Kant said—or rather as Heine made him say—when he altered his intention of remodelling the cosmic system without the interposition of any deity whatever, out of compassion for the blubberings of honest Franz, trudging dutifully behind his master with the big umbrella, "*Il faut un Dieu à ce pauvre Franz.*" So Thackeray, finding that virtuous characters were a necessity, chose at first those which came readiest to his hand, and these were not unnaturally of the conventional milk-and-water type. They could not help improving a little in his hands, but they still bore the stamp of the mawkish original which seemed good enough for the public. But as he went on a better

instinct arose within him ; it became irksome to so finished a workman to leave one side of his piece inferior to the others, and in his second work, though Mrs. Pendennis is still a somewhat silly person, notwithstanding her sweetness, and Laura a hardly perceptible figure, we have reached at least one strong good character in George Warrington. In the elaborate and artistic study which followed, *Pendennis*, the whole scheme is changed, and the centre of the picture is occupied by a character against which the keenest critic could find nothing to say—the really noble figure who dominates all the petty intriguers surrounding him, by the force of his pure and lofty nature. Here Thackeray has set himself to elaborate something resembling Cromwell's "gentleman indeed," as the most perfect type in art as well as in nature, the fittest centre of an exquisitely harmonised composition. But the result was in his own eyes not entirely satisfactory. Esmond, Thackeray himself said, — perhaps not without some hope of being contradicted—was a prig ; and there is perhaps some truth in this self-criticism. In the *Newcomes* he therefore smoothed away whatever stiffness there might be in that lofty conception, purifying—and perhaps strengthening by a slight admixture of weakness—the nobler elements. The result was the perfectly beautiful figure of Thomas Newcome, a picture in

which Thackeray has perhaps reached a higher level than any novelist but Sir Walter Scott. This is the climax beyond which it was impossible for him to go ; when he took up his pen again we seem to find some reflection of Esmond in the less elaborated figure of General Lambert in the *Virginians*. There is a declension in the power of the picture, but the two characters are at heart much the same. We observe something of the same process in the faint echo of the matchless Parson Adams which is produced in the Dr. Harrison of Fielding's last novel *Amelia*.

When we turn to the other characters in Thackeray's studies from contemporary life, we are still less inclined to admit the charge of cynicism which is often brought against him. If he sets himself to draw a blackguard he is too true an artist to omit the redeeming points that are to be found in almost every case. Rawdon Crawley, a stupid and rather brutal sharper, is softened by circumstances into something really fine ; the contemptible hypocrite, Charles Honeyman, sends back the money he had borrowed, to Colonel Newcome in his distress, and the good man breaks down over that one episode alone in his many troubles. Even Amory, the reckless, shameless convict, has his good points. And with the doubtful characters—what Bacon would call the *instantiæ limitis*, those which hover on the

boundary of good and bad — how admirably Thackeray can turn their good qualities towards us. Who does not feel a certain sympathy with the drunken, degraded Costigan, a kind of admiration for the scheming money-lender, Sherrick? To complete this side of the picture we may quote one grand study of a thoughtless scamp, redeemed and elevated as by “a sea-change into something rich and strange” by the contemplation of the goodness of another, in the person of Fred Bayham. For all those whom moralists would sweep aside as worthless, Thackeray had the truly catholic sympathy of a man who has seen enough to find good in everything.

But for another class of evil he, in common with most great artists, had no mercy. In the *Newcomes* he distinctly states his intention of leaving the bad alone, poor fellows, and solely attacking the so-called good. The intense bitterness of the assault upon Mrs. Hobson Newcome and her set,—the “worldly-holy” as Laurence Oliphant afterwards called them,—is the outcome of the feeling that these are the people who think themselves, and are thought to be, better than others. The crusade against this kind of righteousness was what Thackeray really enjoyed. To satirise vice was not half so attractive to him. After the crash which is brought about by Rawdon Crawley’s discovery of

Becky and Lord Steyne we seem to find a certain sympathy with all the wretched actors in the catastrophe. There is a little tribute to the personal courage of Lord Steyne ; there is a certain amount of pity for the destruction of Becky's ambitious dreams. There has been punishment for wrong done, and that is enough ; we must not hit a man when he is down. But what really brings gladness to the heart of the satirist is the fact that the day after the *esclandre* the Bishop of Ealing should have gone to write down his name in the visitor's book at Gaunt House.

It is true that Thackeray did not entirely escape the fate which seems to fall on every satirist of being carried too far in his onslaught upon hypocrisy and attacking some things which are in no way deserving of censure. His detestation of humbug was so intense that he seems to forget that there is some of it which we could scarcely do without. Indeed, were all descriptions of humbug to be swept off the face of the earth at once, the very best Christians would be at each other's throats in half an hour. He blamed the writers of the day for being too mealy-mouthed in their descriptions of character. "Since the author of *Tom Jones* was buried, no writer of fiction among us has been permitted to depict to his utmost power a *Man*." We do not know whether Thackeray had temporarily forgotten that it pleased

Fielding to put his hero, in an episode of which Colonel Newcome afterwards spoke with just severity, into a position so disgraceful that no subsequent writer to our knowledge had ventured to reproduce it, until M. Octave Mirbeau presented a still more repulsive picture in his extremely powerful and intensely disagreeable novel, *Le Calvaire*. Thackeray himself did not venture to go so far into the life of his man, but only set himself to lop off all possible heroic attributes. Indeed Pendennis, who was to be the real Man without any unnatural decoration, is in reality a very innocent person, with plenty of faults no doubt, but these chiefly of the kind that arise from weakness of character. We are not, indeed, sure that Thackeray's philosophy might not be reduced to a belief that feebleness is the distinguishing characteristic of the male of the human species : but this is by no means a striking view, especially when it is the central figure of a book, ordinarily distinguished as the hero, who is chiefly marked by the peculiar instability which distinguishes him from the stronger figures around him. If Pendennis is the natural man, to what class does George Warrington or Captain Strong belong? or even Major Pendennis, all of whom have at least sufficient strength and individuality to follow out their own objects as seems good in their eyes? Why should we see anything more characteristic

of the real man in the wavering figure to which our attention is chiefly directed?

However, Thackeray's desire to represent an unvarnished picture of man as he really is, did not prevent him, as we have already seen, from giving to his next work a central figure which does not fall below the heroic level. Henry Esmond, with all his virtues, is quite as real as Arthur Pendennis. We will not, however, add to what we have already said about this noble figure save as the centre of a very wonderful production. *Esmond* is beyond doubt the first of Thackeray's novels as a work of art. There is something in the exquisite finish and harmony of this book which we can only express by the epithet, artistic; it is a pure combination of perfect taste and perfect workmanship which puts it in a separate class, in which many of the greatest literary works have no claim to rank. The genuine literary artist is not common; Balzac might be cited as a specimen, and George Eliot in her early works: and perhaps, without going quite so high, we might say that we have at present a literary artist of high excellence in Mr. R. L. Stevenson. As a composition *Esmond* is almost without a flaw. The details of the execution are all worked out in the same masterly manner, and the language is perfect. We may take as one instance of the exquisite finish of the minor points the little explanation of Esmond's prejudice against Marlborough. He

is, of course, a man with views of his own concerning his contemporaries whom he judges according to the light in which they present themselves to him, and, as it happens, he is the opponent of the great general and a merciless critic of his conduct. This is natural enough, but there is a yet further light of reality communicated by the revelation in the footnote added by Esmond's daughter, which tells us how Marlborough had spoken of him as having "the hang-dog look of his rogue of a father." Esmond, himself, did not know that this was the origin of his prejudice and that these few words which he had possibly forgotten, had an influence on his whole life. It is like some of the stray touches in Shakespeare,—when Stephano wonders how Caliban came to speak his language, or Sir Toby prays that "the spirit of humours intimate reading aloud" to Malvolio,—mere by-strokes of the pencil, which a less perfect workman would have utterly neglected, but which have a wonderful effect in realising the scene in the minds of both author and spectator.

Like Dickens, Thackeray wrote several Christmas books, the best known of which is the extraordinarily light and playful extravaganza of the *Rose and the Ring*, a story intended for children, but most thoroughly enjoyed by such children as are grown up. We consider the *Rose and the Ring* indeed as almost one of his great

works. It is so absolutely the best thing of its kind, full of such genial humour and such splendid absurdity, carried on just to the proper limit and never allowed to run over into buffoonery. Thackeray had a great turn for this kind of writing, and his burlesques are probably as popular as any of his works. We do not always admire these last. *Rebecca and Rowena* is very funny, but we cannot get rid of a regret that the writer did not choose some other subject to make merry upon ; while the extravagance of the *Legend of the Rhine* seems to us rather wearisome. Another branch of Thackeray's work was his lectures, in which he achieved a great success. His first course of lectures in 1851 was concerned with the *English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century*, including Swift, Addison, Steele, Fielding, Smollett, Sterne and others, a valuable series of extremely lively and entertaining pictures, mingled with acute, but often partial, criticism. The success of these both in England and America was so great that another course was prepared upon the *Four Georges*, which is chiefly remarkable for the famous attack on George IV. Among his other works were *Lovel the Widower*, and the *Adventures of Philip*, both of which appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine*, of which he was appointed the first editor in 1859. At his death in 1863 he left an unfinished historical story entitled *Denis Duval*.

Though literature was, no doubt, the only department in which he was sure of success Thackeray had harboured other aims at different times. For some time he had hopes of some post under Government through the kind offices of his friend Lord Clanricarde. Among others was a secretaryship of legation at Washington, which Lord Clarendon was obliged to refuse him for two reasons. The first, which was that the appointment had already been made, was sufficient for Thackeray. He also stood for Parliament, for the borough of Oxford in 1857, and was defeated by a small majority by Mr. (afterwards Lord) Cardwell, a result on which all parties were to be congratulated. Since his death, his daughter, Mrs. Richmond Ritchie, of whose own works we shall have to speak later, has given the world a collection of the scraps he had left behind him, chiefly drawings, with the delightful burlesque tale of the *Orphan of Pimlico*; and a charming series of letters to his friend Mrs. Brookfield has also appeared. We have not spoken of Thackeray's ballads, clever as they are, for we do not think that they entitle him to rank as a poet, but there is among these letters one touching piece of verse which, with its forced gaiety and undertone of exquisite sadness, seems to enchain the memory. The printer's devil from *Punch* is waiting outside the door for copy as the writer throws off this

little call for the sympathy of the kind friends, whose society is among his greatest consolations.

A lonely man am I through life, my business is to joke
and jeer ;

A lonely man without a wife ; God took from me a lady
dear.

For the private life of Thackeray was overshadowed by one of the most terrible sorrows with which God allows man to be afflicted.

We do not find among the older writers of fiction in our day any one who comes up to the level of the great novelists of whom we have just been speaking, but no period has produced so many of more than average talent in this department of literature. At the commencement of our period we find among the leading names three young writers of the same age whose work had already attracted the attention of the public, Edward Lytton Bulwer, William Harrison Ainsworth, and Benjamin Disraeli. The first and greatest of these in the field of literature was born in 1805, of good family on both sides of the house, his mother being an heiress of the ancient house of Lytton of Knebworth in Hertfordshire, whose name the novelist subsequently assumed on succeeding to their estates. In early youth he began to write poetry and even to publish it from the age of fifteen onwards. Little, however, was ever heard of his *Weeds and Wild Flowers*

or *O'Neill the Rebel*, the author himself positively ignoring their existence in later days. At the age of twenty-two he attempted a novel in the German style called *Falkland*, which was immediately followed by the really remarkable *Pelham*. Few books contain more absurdity or more affectation than *Pelham*, yet it was at once evident that it could only be the production of a writer of more than ordinary talent. For so young an author it was certainly a wonderful effort, showing considerable originality of thought, some humour and a remarkable power of narrative specially evinced in the sensational scenes of the end. The talent thus displayed was not allowed to slumber, but kept in perpetual activity for the rest of his life. In his early career, however, Bulwer seemed to be constantly changing his style and venturing upon some new branch of fiction as if doubtful in which he would finally excel; indeed he did not strike the richest vein of all till comparatively late in life. *Pelham* was followed by two novels of considerable merit, *The Disowned* and *Devereux*, after which the author made a regrettable excursion into the realms of sentimental crime with *Paul Clifford* and *Eugene Aram*. We think, however, that Bulwer has received more than his fair share of obloquy as one of those who represented crime in an attractive light. We cannot imagine Paul

Clifford exciting any other sentiment than that of weariness, while as for the other it should be remembered that it is still extremely doubtful whether Eugene Aram was really guilty of the murder for which he was executed, and that Bulwer went distinctly on the ground that he was only a more or less accidental spectator of the crime. A more successful attempt in a fresh direction was made in the *Last Days of Pompeii*, a picture of ancient times reconstructed with much skill, which was followed by the interesting historical romance of *Rienzi*. By these works—in which, with many objectionable mannerisms and a superabundance of high-flown sentiment, impressed upon the reader's mind by the lavish use of capital letters, there was much to praise—Bulwer had made himself a considerable reputation in literature at the commencement of the reign. He had succeeded Campbell in the editorship of the *New Monthly Magazine*, and even planned a periodical of his own, the *Monthly Chronicle*, which, however, was not a success. He had also been for some years a not undistinguished member of Parliament. He now turned his thoughts to dramatic writing, in which he had already made an unsuccessful attempt. The *Lady of Lyons*, first produced in 1838, was received with favour and is still popular, and the same may be said for the slightly less successful plays

of *Richelieu* and *Money*. In the department of fiction *Night and Morning* at least maintained his early reputation ; *Zanoni* opened a new field of research into the supernatural ; while the *Last of the Barons* and *Harold* showed that he had lost none of his power as a writer of historical fiction. In poetry he was less successful, his epic *King Arthur* being a complete failure.

It was not, however, till more than twenty years after the publication of *Pelham* that his greatest period as a novelist began. The *Caxtons*, published anonymously in *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1848, came to the public as a revelation of a new style much simpler and more powerful than anything he had done before. This was followed by *My Novel*, a work which commences as a perfect idyll of country life, but wanders off later into complicated intrigues and melodramatic episodes in an unreal world peopled with impossible characters like Randal Leslie or Harley Lestrangle. As long as we remain in the village of Hazledean with the Squire and the Parson, Dr. Riccabocca and Lenny Fairfield, we desire no wider horizon and no better company, and we think it most unfortunate that the writer was not of the same mind. Something of the same criticism might be applied to his next novel, *What will he do with it?* which commences charmingly with the adventures of Waife, but

goes off again into melodrama interspersed with high-flown sentiment and simply bristling with quotations from Horace. There is much more sustained excellence in the *Caxtons*, which practically retains its original simplicity throughout its three volumes. Austin and Roland Caxton are never thrust aside to make play for melodramatic schemers or conventional heroes, and the atmosphere in which they live is equally healthy from first to last. With these three novels, which rank so very much higher than any of his other work, the author's literary career came more or less to a standstill, though he continued writing up to his death in 1873. The *Strange Story*, published in *All the Year Round* in 1862, was a continuation of the train of thought started in *Zanoni*, which had considerable merit. The same love of the supernatural was shown in his admirable short story of the *Haunters and the Haunted* which originally appeared in *Blackwood*. The novels of his later days, the *Coming Race*, the *Parisians*, and *Kenelm Chillingley*, did little to increase his reputation. Bulwer Lytton—as he was called in later days—devoted much attention to politics and was Colonial Secretary under Lord Derby in 1858-59. He was made a baronet in 1838 and in 1866 was raised to the peerage by the title of Baron Lytton.

Equally fertile in production, but by no means comparable to Bulwer in ability, William Harrison Ainsworth has chiefly gained notice as a writer of historical novels. Born in Manchester in 1805, he was in early life articled to a solicitor, but failed to find a congenial pursuit in the law. In 1826 he published his first novel, *Sir John Chiverton*, of which, however, he appears not to have been the sole author. In the same year he married the daughter of his publisher, John Ebers, and made a venture in the same line of business as his father-in-law, but soon abandoned this and returned to literature. In 1834 he made his first success with the novel of *Rookwood*, in which the praises of Dick Turpin, the highwayman, are sung with an ardour worthy of a better cause. It sprang at once into a popularity which was perhaps above its merits; it had, however, the advantage of being condemned by moralists as tending to the encouragement of vice. We are not tempted to join in the chorus of admiration, but will admit that there is some power in the description of the famous ride to York. A few years later, Ainsworth returned to the safer path of historical romance with the somewhat tedious novel of *Crichton*, but in 1839 again shocked the world with the history of *Jack Sheppard*, a work much inferior to *Rookwood* in literary merit. *Jack*

Sheppard appeared in *Bentley's Miscellany*, to the editorship of which Ainsworth succeeded on the retirement of Dickens, retaining it till 1841 when he set up a magazine under his own name. On the failure of this enterprise, to which he contributed some of his novels, he purchased the *New Monthly Magazine*, which he conducted for many years. We have no space to speak at length of his numerous historical novels. They are, for the most part, built on the foundation of G. P. R. James, and, if less wordy, are not very much more exciting; the characters are usually too conscious of their responsibility to history to venture to throw much reality into their words or deeds. Among the most popular were the *Tower of London* (1840), *Old St. Paul's* (1841), *Windsor Castle* (1843), the *Lancashire Witches* (1848), the *Flitch of Bacon* (1854), and *Boscobel* (1872). Ainsworth continued to write novels up to the end of his life, his last publication being *Stanley Brereton*, which appeared in 1882. He died in the following year.

The third of the three novelists whom we have grouped together, for chronological reasons chiefly, belonged to a very different kind. Benjamin Disraeli was a writer of a class by himself. His literary career was almost as singular as was the far more important figure which he made in politics. Born in the end of 1804, and, like

Ainsworth, receiving his first training as a solicitor's clerk, he made his first appearance in literature in 1826 as the author of a satirical poem called the *Dunciad of To-day*. This was followed almost immediately by the curious and startling novel of *Vivian Grey*, the first of those extraordinary literary fireworks in which, as also in political pyrotechny, Disraeli was a born adept. The public gasped and wondered, doubtful what manner of thing this might be that was presented to them, and then paid the necessary tribute of admiration to the brilliancy of an exhibition which they found much difficulty in estimating at its proper value. *Vivian Grey* was quickly followed by a number of other novels, *Captain Popanilla*, the *Young Duke*, *Contarini Fleming*, the extraordinary gibberish of *Alroy*, and the more ordinary and pleasant love-tales of *Venetia* and *Henrietta Temple*. By the commencement of the reign Disraeli had secured a seat in Parliament, after veering round to every point of the political compass as occasion served. He came out as a candidate under the wing of O'Connell at Wycombe in 1832, and was returned for Maidstone in 1837 as the uncompromising opponent of his early protector. Disraeli was, indeed, throughout life a man who fought for his own hand under various banners ; but with his political career we have nothing to

do, except in so far as it influenced his writings. In 1844 he published his most successful novel, *Coningsby*, a work which we now find somewhat fatiguing to read, from its high-flown style and stilted characters, but which gained a great reputation in its day and is certainly not without some signs of literary genius. It served the treble purpose of laying the political views of what was then called the "Young England" party before the public, paying a really fine tribute to the character of the great Jewish race, to which the author belonged, through the grand but impossible person of Sidonia, and satirising many living persons, whom it was this writer's lamentable and unartistic practice to introduce into his novels under such thin disguises that the public could not fail to penetrate them. The next year saw the production of the almost equally remarkable novel of *Sybil*, which was also much concerned with contemporary politics, and three years later came *Tancred*, a book chiefly remarkable for its powerful delineation of the characteristics of the Arabian race, and also for the foreshadowing of the Eastern policy which Disraeli lived to carry out in some measure, many years later. After *Tancred* came a lull, Disraeli being too much occupied with his political duties, as he was now recognised as the leader of the Conservative party in the House of Commons, for writing of any

kind. In 1870 he came again before the literary world with another of the startling productions which had made a name for him in early life. It was difficult to tell what *Lothair* was intended for, whether it might not perhaps be a sort of gigantic joke, intended to see how much the British public were prepared to take in. *Endymion*, published ten years later, was more human and natural, though still dealing with fine company and social splendours of the most dazzling kind. This was the last work of the great politician who brought to an end in 1881 such an extraordinary career as has rarely been known in the history of England.

Among minor novelists at the commencement of the reign, some special notice is due to Samuel Warren (1807-77), a lawyer of some eminence, who had begun by studying medicine and whose *Diary of a late Physician*, published in *Blackwood's Magazine* (1838-40), attracted a good deal of attention. In 1841 followed his principal novel, *Ten Thousand a Year*, which shows considerable power of comic, or rather grotesque picturing, and might take a high rank in fiction but for the terribly virtuous and high-flown characters which were apparently the pride of the author's heart. Aubrey, his favourite hero, was chosen by Thackeray as an excellent example of several branches of snobbishness. Warren also wrote

another novel, *Now and Then*, and a number of legal books, and was a frequent contributor to *Blackwood*. Another officer in the army of Blackwood, Captain Thomas Hamilton, younger brother of Sir William Hamilton, was known by his lively novel *Cyril Thornton*, but wrote little of any importance in the present reign.

James Morier (1780-1848), who was at one time the British representative at the Court of Teheran, was best known as the writer of the *Adventures of Hajji Baba in Ispahan* (1824) and *in England* (1828). His contributions to the literature of the present reign, including *Abel Allnutt* (1839) and the *Mirza* (1841), were less successful. Robert Bell (1800-67), a journalist of Irish extraction, contributed two novels to the literature of the Victorian era, *Hearts and Altars* (1854), and the *Ladder of Gold* (1856). He was also the author of some successful comedies, contributed some good historical works to Lardner's *Cabinet Cyclopædia*, and edited a valuable edition of the English poets, which unfortunately was never finished.

A more striking figure is that of Captain Marryat, whose delightful books of adventure have been the treasure of many generations of boys, few of whom have renounced their allegiance to him even after they have begun to take an interest in less exciting literature. Frederick

Marryat was born in 1792, and, entering the navy at an early age, achieved great distinction in that service. Besides these achievements in the ordinary course of his duty, Marryat showed great personal courage in saving many lives from drowning, for which he received the medal of the Royal Humane Society. He was also the inventor of the code of signals used in the merchant services throughout the civilised world, and was thanked by the House of Commons for this valuable invention. His chief services to his country, however, have been through his literary works, which are full of the liveliest patriotism and devotion to the common weal. It was not till 1830 that he published his first novel of *Frank Mildmay*, which, we must admit, is not among his best. Four years later came his most successful book, *Peter Simple*, a combination of exciting adventure and homely humour, which seems to us unsurpassed in its kind. To this succeeded many others generally of the same description, among which we should particularly select *Jacob Faithful* and *Midshipman Easy* as the two best examples of his peculiar style. None of the subsequent books, however, appear to us to come near to *Peter Simple*. He died in 1848. His daughter, Miss Florence Marryat, has also gained herself a certain place among English novelists.

As Captain Marryat is the chronicler *par*

excellence of naval exploits, we must mention in connection with him some of those writers of fiction who devoted themselves to military adventure. A contemporary of Marryat's to whom this latter subject naturally offered itself was the Rev. George Robert Gleig (1796-1888), chaplain-general to the forces, who in his youth had served in the army throughout the Peninsular and Waterloo campaigns and was only ordained after his retirement from the service in 1820. His principal work, the *Subaltern*, was published in *Blackwood* in 1826, and was succeeded by other stories, *Allan Breck*, the *Chronicles of Waltham*, the *Only Daughter*, the *Light Dragoon*, and many valuable works on military history. Another writer who may more properly be compared with Marryat, though belonging to a later generation, was Charles Lever, so well known for his spirited tales and romances of Irish life. Born in 1806, and educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, Lever took up medicine as a profession, doing specially good service during the outbreak of cholera in Ireland in 1832. He afterwards practised in Brussels, where perhaps the vicinity of Waterloo exercised some influence over his mind; at least the idea of his military novels seems first to have occurred to him here. His first work was the *Confessions of Harry Lorrequer*, which is little more than a collection of

extremely amusing stories. *Charles O'Malley*, published a year or two later, was more deliberately planned and more elaborately carried out, a fascinating mixture of adventure and fun, which established the claims of Lever to a place in literature on a firm footing. Among his subsequent books, those which treat of military life or of Irish peculiarities are the most successful, among which we may perhaps select *Jack Hinton* and *Tom Burke*, the story of an Irish soldier in the service of Napoleon. The latter part of his life Lever spent chiefly on the Continent, as a Consul at Spezzia, Trieste, etc., and his later works were more elaborate, full of diplomacy and intrigue, full, too, of the speculations and devices of that special figure, the Irishman abroad, but failing considerably in the racy fun and wit of his earlier works. His plots become too intricate, and the various threads of his story so irretrievably mixed that the author himself seemed to forget what his original intention had been, and merely sought the quickest way out of the labyrinth in which he had involved himself. The end of his life was enlivened by the success of a series of papers on things in general, and continental politics in particular, contributed to *Blackwood* under the *nom de plume* of Cornelius O'Dowd. Lever died in 1872.

As an exponent of Irish humour, Lever

naturally recalls to us the many talented writers of the same nationality who were prominent about the beginning of our period. Gerald Griffin (1803-40), the talented author of the *Collegians*, had practically ceased writing by the commencement of the reign and retired into a monastery in 1838. The Banim brothers, joint authors of the well-known *O'Hara Tales*, who were both older than Griffin, lived to collaborate in one more work, *Father Connell*, published in 1840, which was perhaps one of their best productions. John Banim, the younger brother, was already attacked by the disease to which he succumbed two years later, and his part in this last work was probably small. Michael, however, continued to write, though his time was greatly taken up by the duties of a small post granted to him by the Government. His last novel, the *Town of the Cascades*, published in 1864, was not unworthy of his best days. Michael Banim died in 1873. William Hamilton Maxwell (1794-1850), an Irish clergyman with a living in Connaught, is also included in our period, though his best-known work, the *Stories of Waterloo*, is of earlier date. A more enduring reputation was earned by William Carleton (1794-1869), whose charming *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry* did perhaps more to acquaint the English public with the real nature and characteristics of his people than any

of the writers we have already mentioned. His contributions to Victorian literature include *Fardorougha the Miser* (1839), the alternately humorous and melancholy *Misfortunes of Barney Branagan* (1840), and his most elaborate work, *Valentine M'Clutchy, the Irish Agent*. Carleton continued to write busily up to his death in 1869. Few of the distinctively Irish authors we have mentioned are better known than Samuel Lover (1797-1868). Lover, who was originally a miniature painter by profession,—in which capacity he is remembered by his portrait of Paganini,—did not begin his literary career till tolerably late in life, his first production being the *Legends and Stories illustrative of Irish Character*, which was succeeded by other works of a similar kind. In 1837 appeared his first novel, *Rory O'More*, a spirited story of the Irish rebellion, and in 1842-43 a series of extremely comic scenes in a kind of novel form published in *Bentley's Miscellany* under the title of *Handy Andy*. Lover also wrote Irish songs, set them to music and sang them himself, after the fashion of, though greatly inferior to, the poet Moore. According to the spirit of the day, he also gave entertainments, which he called "Irish Evenings," consisting of his own sketches of Irish manners, stories and songs.

A much more remarkable figure, whose

appearance upon the field of fiction was of somewhat later date, took at once a conspicuous place among English novelists. Charles Kingsley was born in Devonshire, in 1819, of an ancient Cheshire family and educated partly in private by Derwent Coleridge and partly at King's College School, from which he went to Magdalen College, Cambridge, where he greatly distinguished himself, both in classics and mathematics. On leaving the University he took orders and was appointed to the curacy of Eversley in Hampshire, of which he became rector in 1844. In this country parish he remained to his death, receiving some preferment in the Church, as Canon of Chester (1869) and of Westminster (1873). He was also for ten years Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, and held other more or less honorary appointments consistent with his position. His first literary attempt had been in the way of dramatic poetry, with the *Saint's Tragedy*, founded upon the story of St. Elizabeth of Hungary. This poem, which has received a measure of praise perhaps superior to its merits, was an achievement not unfitted to the clerical career of its author, and might not in itself have extended his fame much beyond the limits of ecclesiastical and scholarly circles, but events soon happened which brought the writer more clearly before the general world. In the great upheavings of 1848,

when some men thought that the worst days of the French Revolution were returning, and others looked to a brief convulsion preceding the general establishment of peace on earth and goodwill towards men, Kingsley was one of the observers who believed that so great and general a movement must be productive of good if it were only directed to a really good object, and not to some impossible ideal, the realisation of which would not even be desirable if it could be obtained. Plunging, with his leader Frederick Denison Maurice, into the social questions of the day, Kingsley aimed, as did the school which he followed, at introducing a Christian leaven into the half-formed and undigested schemes and aspirations of the working classes. His sympathy with the wants which have inspired many an ill-advised and ill-directed movement brought some measure of obloquy upon him, and he was for some time known by the nickname of the "Chartist parson." What his views and hopes really were he tried to lay before the public in the remarkable novel of *Alton Locke*, published in 1849. In this supposed autobiography of a young, self-educated poet, a tailor by trade, Kingsley endeavoured with considerable power to throw himself into the position of his hero, to realise the aims and hopes of the man who feels his position to be an unjust and unnecessary drag upon his efforts to rise, and even

the prejudice and ignorance which affect his views of the society above him, though circumstances have given him a somewhat clearer insight than his fellows. In Alton Locke himself, in the queer old misanthrope who is his instructor in life, in the fiery Chartist who is his chosen friend, the author not only introduced some original ideas and political doctrines very novel to the circles of which he was himself a member, but attained a high literary success. *Yeast*, a slighter attempt on much the same lines, published shortly afterwards, was full, as its name indicates, of the new leaven which was supposed to be working under the surface of society, and which raised the game-keeper Tregartha into the position previously occupied by the hero of a higher class : but though in many ways powerful as a study, it was too little real to produce any permanent impression.

Some years later, in 1853, Kingsley attempted a new departure with *Hypatia*, a story treating of the life of ancient Alexandria. The power with which the author managed to reproduce the scenes of a past so entirely perished, is very remarkable in this novel ; the more dramatic incidents are related with great spirit, and some of the characters, such as that of St. Cyril, are brought very distinctly before our eyes. The defect in this case, as in a lesser degree with *Alton Locke*, is the extreme length of the book, which is chiefly due

to the lengthened philosophical discussions which retard the action and break the continuity of the composition. This is too common a fault in our own day, but a fault it remains for a writer of fiction. A more thoroughly successful effort as a novel was *Westward Ho!* published in 1855, a story of adventure in the Elizabethan buccaneering days. It is perhaps not the noblest form of enterprise to make the object of hero-worship, but the reader of Kingsley's novel is apt to forget whether the exploits of Amyas Leigh are in perfect accordance with the principles of abstract justice. Among Kingsley's other works were *Two Years Ago*, a novel (1857); *Hereward the Wake*, a historical tale (1866); the *Heroes* (1856), a delightful revival of some legends of ancient Greece; the *Water Babies*, a fairy tale (1863); and *Glaucus*, a pleasant essay in natural history, published in 1857. Charles Kingsley died in 1875.

His younger brother, Henry, was also a writer of considerable power. Born in 1830, so many years younger than Charles that he almost belonged to a different generation, Henry made his reputation by novels of a different cast, in which country life and sport are among the favourite themes. *Ravenshoe*, his most successful work, published in 1861, has more of plot and more studied delineation of character than is found in the majority of his books; the well-known

incident of the rough and rather brutal Welter's hesitation between right and wrong when he is called upon to do his duty at the cost of a fortune to himself, shows a latent power which might have raised the author to a very high place in literature. Most of his novels, however, are cast in a slighter mould. *Mademoiselle Mathilde*, a story of the French Revolution, may be mentioned as one of the best. Henry Kingsley also contributed much to periodical literature, and was for a considerable time editor of the *Edinburgh Daily Review*, in whose service he went out to the Franco-German war as his own war correspondent. He died at an early age in 1876.

Another writer whose novels are chiefly occupied with field sports or adventure—which is the more remarkable that the author himself was a cripple all his life—was Francis Edward Smedley (1818-64). His books, of which *Frank Fairlegh*, *Lewis Arundel*, and *Harry Coverdale's Courtship* are the most popular, contain a combination of exciting adventure and good honest fun, and are written in a thoroughly healthy tone.

The period of which we are writing was not so full of writers of fiction as the present time. It was still thought possible that artists, men of science, lawyers, doctors, soldiers, sailors, and men and women of leisure might preserve their natural position in society without having written a novel.

The numbers, however, were even then sufficiently large, and we cannot be expected to enter upon a record of all the rank and file of this noble army. Among the better known writers who hardly reached the front rank, we may mention Colonel Meadows Taylor (1808-1876), a distinguished Indian officer, who was the author of some remarkable novels dealing with scenes of Indian life. Among the most successful were the *Confessions of a Thug*, imparting to the public something of his peculiar knowledge of that wild sect, which he had done so much to exterminate; *Tara*, a historical tale dealing with the Mussulman and Mahratta wars in the seventeenth century, and *Seeta*, a story of the Mutiny. Another writer of some note was James Hannay (1827-73). A naval officer in early life and afterwards a journalist of considerable eminence, for some years editor of the *Edinburgh Courant*, Hannay will chiefly be remembered by two spirited novels, of which the incidents were taken from naval life, *Singleton Fontenoy* and *Eustace Conyers*. His lectures on *Satire and Satirists* and essays contributed to the *Quarterly Review*, and afterwards republished in a volume, also show much ability. A journalist of less note, Angus Bethune Reach (1822-56), was also the author of several novels, of which *Clement Lorimer* received some praise, of some French sketches published under the name of *Claret and Olives*,

and a rather amusing *Natural History of Bores*, which had some success in its day. Among other novel-writers we find many names which are better known in other connections. Albert Smith (1816-90), who achieved a kind of immortality for himself by his clever entertainments, in which department he perhaps never met his match, would scarcely have been remembered as the author of the *Adventures of Mr. Ledbury*, the *Marchioness of Brinvilliers*, and other ephemeral stories. Of Douglas Jerrold, Charles Shirley Brooks, author of the *Silver Cord*, and other writers of a similar class we shall have to speak in a later chapter, as the first leaders in the great enterprise of *Punch*.

Of Mrs. Gore, though an exceedingly voluminous writer of fiction, there is not much to say. She still continued to write during the earlier portion of the Victorian period, but her style and manner were essentially of the past. The fashionable novel, as she understood and executed it, was of Almack's and that transition period between the wild days of the Regency and the new-born decorum of the young Queen's purified court. The thing still exists, and it is very likely that the older version would contrast favourably with that existing in the present day; but it is at least so different as to show how much more antiquated is an old fashion than the oldest nature can ever

be. Mrs. Marsh, long known as the author of *Emilia Wyndham*, has something of the same kind of old-fashioned air, but not in the same way. Hers was the novel of sentiment which is indeed never out of date, yet changes its mode almost as much as the other. Sweet and gentle heroines with long ringlets falling gracefully from drooping heads, in the simplicity of white muslin and sandalled shoes, young men who were the model of every domestic virtue, and an elegant home and hearth which was sometimes swept by misfortune, but always lighted up by feminine guilelessness and grace, were her subjects. There were villains, too, as was necessary, but villains of the most artless kind and always delightfully distinct, so that the most careless reader might make no mistake on the subject. These two ladies were the last of their respective kind for the time. The atmosphere was about to be stirred by a new and startling claimant of the highest honours in fiction, of a kind so new and rebellious to all the ancient traditions as to frighten the public for the first moment almost as much as she charmed it.

It would be unnecessary and out of place here to enter into the curious story of those three daughters of the country parson on the Yorkshire moors, whose little chronicle has been repeated over and over again until we know it by heart, with many attempts to make the

circumstances account for the very exceptional character of these three remarkable women of genius. As a matter of fact many women of original character and individuality have been born and trained in a lonely country parish without eating their hearts out as the Brontës did with cravings for advantages beyond their reach, or rebelling as they did against the bonds of poverty and solitude. It was they who were so greatly out of the common and not their circumstances. The youngest of the three, Anne (1819-49), need scarcely have been mentioned except for her relationship to the other two, whose vehemence and strong impulse carried her along with them even into literature, but in a gentler way. Without them she might have been a writer of gentle poems, perhaps the teller of a domestic tale: but not more. Emily Brontë, the second sister (1818-48), a person of so much character and force that her personality was almost violent, wrote one wild story, *Wuthering Heights*, full of fierce life and tragedy, and the breath of moorland winds and storms, and several short poems of a remarkable character: and died, having fought out her short life, beating her wings like an imprisoned bird against the bars of her cage.

Charlotte Brontë, the eldest sister of the three, lived longer and attained a sudden and extraordinary fame, making a kind of revolution in

fiction, and influencing the entire generation, at least of female writers, after her. It is not too much to say of *Jane Eyre*, her first work, published in 1847, that it took the world by storm. Published anonymously, or what is nearly the same thing, under the fictitious name of Currer Bell, it was for a short time unnoticed by the critics, but having been accidentally brought under the observation of one who had the discrimination to perceive the unusual power of the new writer, was suddenly caught up by the public, which only wanted that spark to set it on flame. *Jane Eyre* was professedly the story of a little governess, an orphan girl without beauty or pretensions educated in a school of genteel charity, of which the most bold and realistic picture was given, with that disregard of all polite fiction and charitable interpretation which is familiar nowadays, but which was quite novel to a more smooth-spoken time. This girl, the little rebel of Lowood, grows into a woman full of quaint attraction, and by accident enters as strange a household as ever figured in fiction, the master of which, Edward Rochester, a man who has exhausted all the excitements of the world, finds something piquant to replace them in the struggles of this little brilliant, intelligent, plain girl to escape his love and himself. Rochester was a new type among the heroes of fiction, a woman's hero, yet altogether different

from the faultless, deferential and adoring paladin who had previously occupied the chief place among these creations. A domineering master, sometimes almost brutal, sometimes indulgent, but always the sovereign and tyrant for whom according to this theory the true woman pined, desiring to be commanded and taken possession of—he introduced a complete revolution into that large part of the realm of fiction in which the feminine imagination is supreme. The vivid individuality of the new writer, the conviction which she had the power of conveying into the reader's mind that the story she was telling was as true in its after-course as it was in those beginning chapters—which were evidently taken from the life—produced a universal impression which scarcely anything in the story of recent literature has equalled. The fame of George Eliot was greater, but it was at its commencement of a less personal, keen and individual kind.

The publisher who had divined the genius of Currer Bell, to his great credit and honour, invited her to London, and all the literary world crowded to see the little person, who was exactly what she had described herself—a plain young woman much embarrassed by the notice which she excited, shy and silent, however, as her Jane had not been. She was, we think, allowed to relapse into her natural quiet, and to return to her moorland

parsonage, after this ineffectual attempt to make a literary lion of her. But her reputation was rather enhanced than lessened by the failure. Her second book, *Shirley*, was less powerful than her first, and much more artificial. It showed perhaps something of the strain of a writer put on her mettle and fully bent on exceeding, if possible, the previous natural and spontaneous effort. But it was also revolutionary to the highest degree, casting aside that discreet veil of the heroine which almost all previous novelists had respected, and representing the maiden on the tip-toe of expectation, no longer modestly awaiting the coming of Prince Charming, but craning her neck out of every window in almost fierce anticipation, and upbraiding heaven and earth which kept her buried in those solitudes out of his way.

The third of Miss Brontë's works, *Villette*, published 1853, returned in a great measure to the atmosphere of *Jane Eyre*, the scene being laid in Brussels and in a school there, and the real hero—after one or two failures—being found in the person of a French master, the fiery, vivacious, undignified and altogether delightful M. Paul Emmanuel, who plays upon the heroine's heart and nerves something after the manner of Rochester, but who is so absolutely real in his fantastic peculiarities and admirable tender manly character

that the pranks he plays and the confusion he produces are all forgiven him. Lucy Snowe, the heroine, the cool little proper Englishwoman, with the well-concealed volcano under her primness, is by no means so captivating as Jane Eyre, but every detail is so astonishingly true to life—and the force and vigour of the romance, occasionally reaching to fever-heat, and all the more startling from its contrast with the cold white Brussels house, the school atmosphere and the chill exterior of Miss Snowe—so absorbing, that the book made a still greater impression than *Jane Eyre*, and the ultimate fate of M. Paul, left uncertain at the conclusion, was debated in a hundred circles with greater vehemence than many a national problem.

Miss Brontë had the great advantage with the public of ending there, and leaving her fame to rest upon those three books. She herself accepted the fate involved in her position as if there had been no brilliant and wonderful episode of fame and fortune, married her father's curate (after holding up his class to the laughter of the world), and died shortly after in those Yorkshire wolds which she loved, yet hated, which had been the desolate country of her hot and impetuous youth, yet remained the home of her maturer years when she might well have chosen a brighter. No spot in England has been more described and over-described

than the grim little village of Haworth, with its little church and parsonage, the home of this extraordinary family. The memoirs of Miss Brontë, or rather of the Brontës in general, afterwards written by her friend, Mrs. Gaskell, gave the greatest prominence to this scene, and to the circumstances of the family, in a way which—powerful and interesting as the book was—made a first beginning of that dreadful art of confidential revelation which has gone to such lengths since then. The faults of other members of the household, the tragedy of the dissipated brother—which were such details as honourable families have been wont to bury in their bosoms and keep religiously from the knowledge of the world—were laid bare without mercy in order to account for the peculiarities of the minds, and manner of regarding the world, of the sisters. The Brontës were far from unique in such experiences, as all the world knows. It was themselves who were extraordinary, not their circumstances, and Mrs. Gaskell set an example in this book which has added a new terror to death, and a new danger to those whose lives fall under that fierce light which beats—not only upon thrones, but on many less exalted regions, in these curious and all-inquiring days.

Mrs. Gaskell herself (1810-65) had also taken a high place in fiction slightly previous to

the *début* of Miss Brontë. Her first novel, *Mary Barton*, published 1848, was an illustration of a life with which she was thoroughly acquainted, the life of Manchester, not only among its aristocracy of wealth (which she treats somewhat harshly), but among the labouring population of the factories, with all its strongly-marked characteristics. The passionate sense of shame mingled with the still more impassioned parental love which seeks and searches for the lost with the ardour of a primitive nature, even while overwhelmed by the weight of disgrace brought upon it—is always a noble and touching picture, and Mrs. Gaskell's perception of the true poetry and nobleness of this situation was much more elevated in fiction than in the after-portrayal of actual life above referred to. She could understand with the profound intuition of genius how the door should be open night and day for Lizzie's return, and the parent's heart ever intent for the tottering footsteps of the wanderer—although she did not hesitate to betray the secrets of poor Bramwell Brontë when the story was one of her own friends and class: thus proving how much more true is sometimes the instinct of art than the misleading guidance of fact and moral indignation.

Mary Barton at once established Mrs. Gaskell's reputation, which was confirmed by its successors. The story of *Ruth*, published in 1850, raised

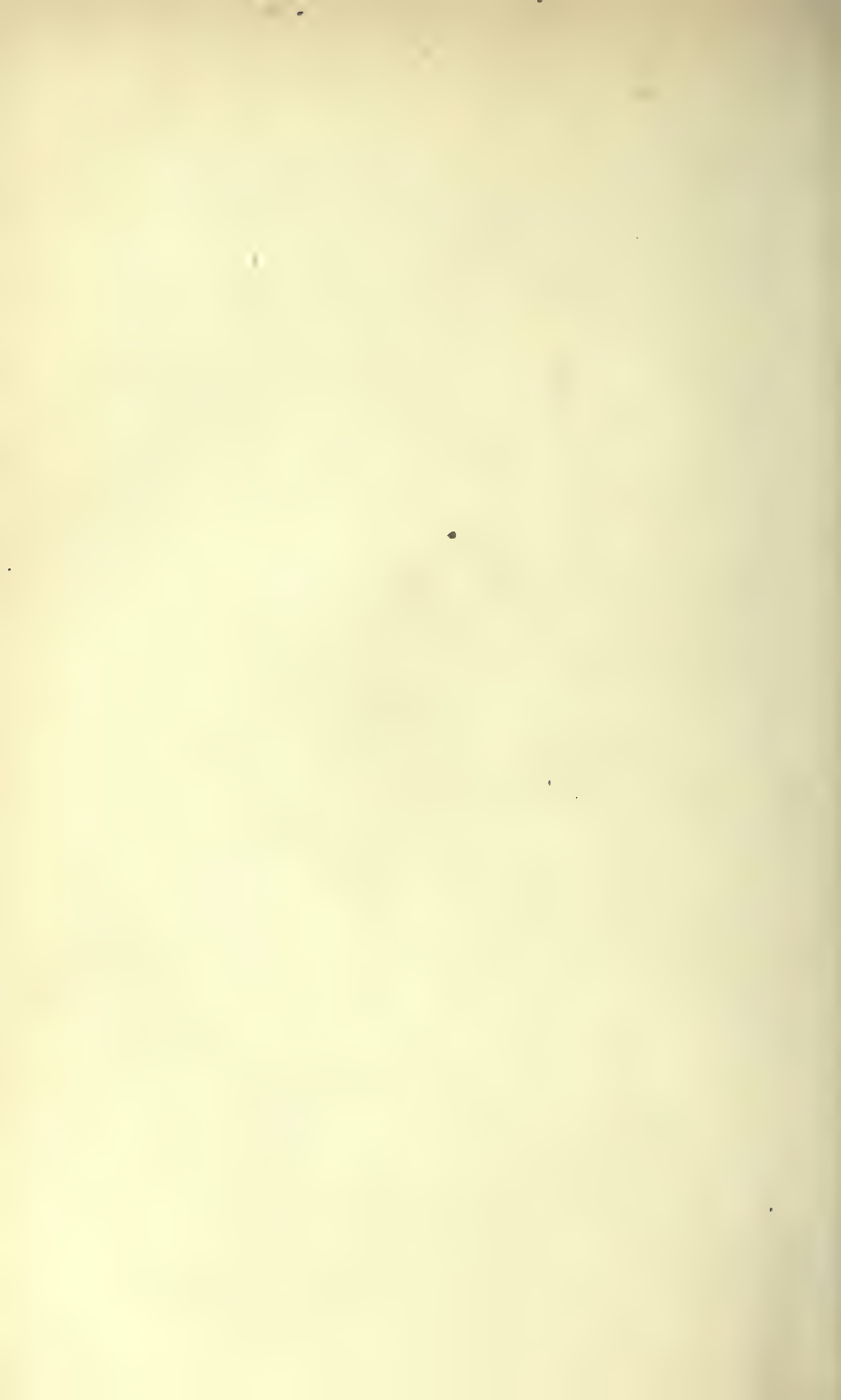
many criticisms and objections which may seem almost ridiculous in this advanced day. It is the old story of seduction, in which an innocent girl is ruined by over-trust in the immemorial villain of romance, but being taken up by compassionate strangers in a place where she is quite unknown, is introduced by them as a young widow, wins the respect of all around, and brings up her child in an atmosphere of almost excessive honour and purity. The harmless fraud was denounced by the critics with a warmth which it is difficult nowadays to understand. *Nous en avons bien vu d'autres*, and are no longer liable to be shocked by such a very pardonable device; though it entails trouble and sorrow we need not add, or it could scarcely have provided machinery enough for a novel. Among Mrs. Gaskell's other works we may mention *Sylvia's Lovers*, a striking and spirited romance, and the remarkable little record of village life, *Cranford*, with its little feminine genteel community in which a man is a startling intruder, in which the gentle benevolences and dove-like rancours of the little place are set forth with admirable fidelity and tenderness, in the subdued colours natural to such a landscape. Without either the keen vivacity or quiet force of Miss Austen, it is yet a book which may be placed on the same shelf with hers; and there could be no higher praise. It was received with

an enthusiasm which has suffered no diminution by the course of years.

Mrs. Gaskell's last work, *Wives and Daughters*, which she left unfinished though very near its completion at her death, was a work of broader effects than any of the others, and was in many respects an almost perfect example of the best English novel of the time, a type much followed, and much weakened since. It may be said that in those days there was less competition than now and fewer champions in the field. Yet such competitors for public favour as Mrs. Gaskell and Charlotte Brontë are few at any time. They were the first of the novelists of the new period (excepting the two great figures which were too conspicuous to be types of a class) to break new ground and give character to the beginning age.

We place here, in despair of knowing how to classify them, the pair of writers whose joint names were well known on many a title-page in the forties and fifties of this century—William (1795-1879) and Mary (1799-1888) Howitt, the authors of some novels, and compilers of many books which have disappeared from the surface of the earth altogether, though their names, at least that of Mary Howitt, still "smell sweet and blossom in the dust." They were both originally Quakers, whence, perhaps, the invariable use of their Christian names, and both began with poetry,

which sweetened their homely life of traditional quiet without doing much in itself for the fortunes of the young pair. From this, however, they gradually slid into literature with such productions as the *Book of the Seasons*, *Rural Life in England*, etc., full of easy and pleasant writing without much reason for it. Many of Mary Howitt's verses, however, were full of tender feeling and secured a certain hold on the youthful reader of the time. They spent a laborious life in book-making, almost always working together and taking up many literary enterprises. Among other works Mrs. Howitt translated the novels of Fredrika Bremer, the Swedish novelist, which for their own merit and originality, as well as for the sake of the excellent translation, became very popular in England. After many years of this hard-working life in England, diversified with travels, each of which had an after-record in a book, the Howitts finally settled in Italy, where William Howitt died in 1879 and his wife, in extreme old age, in 1888.



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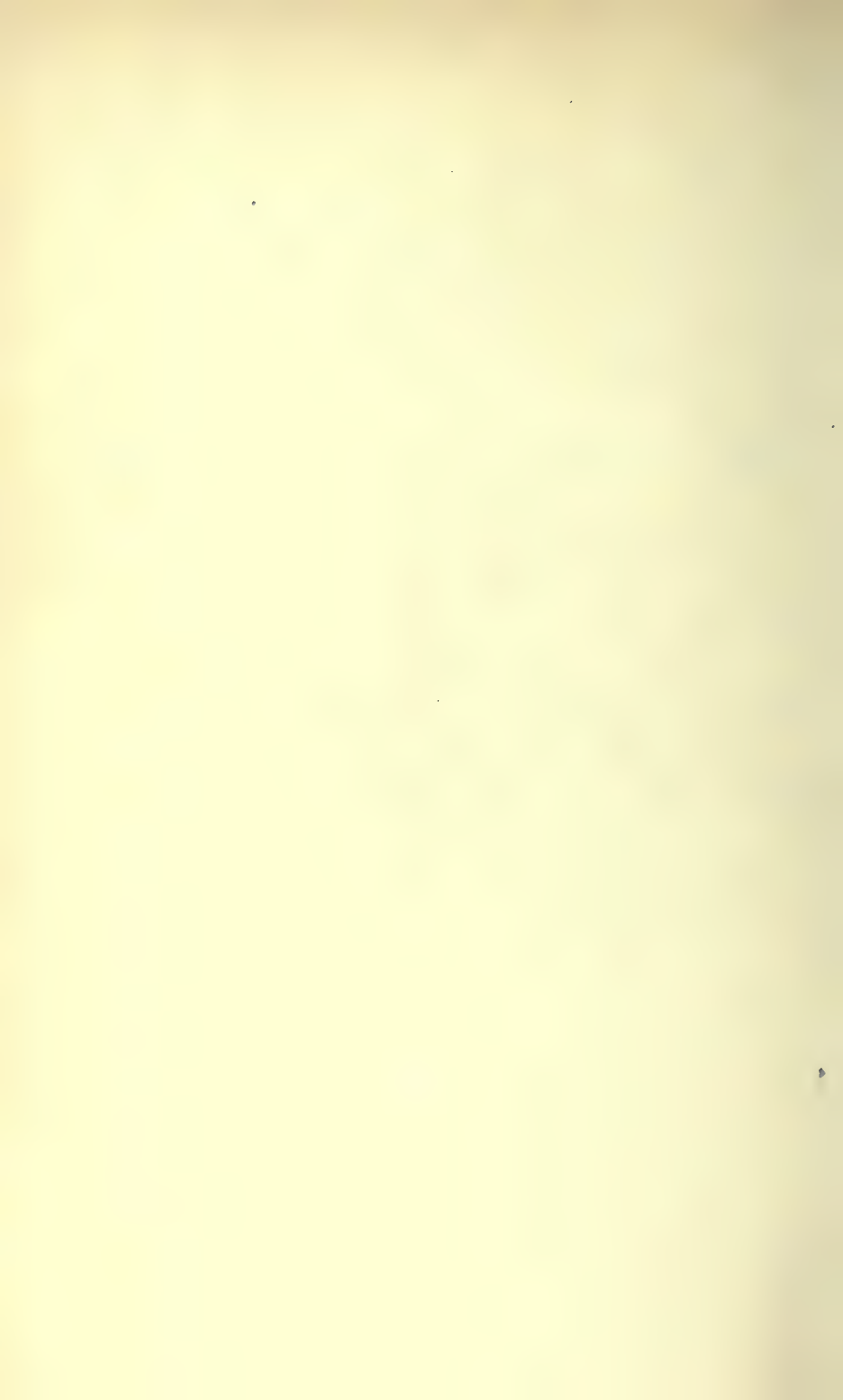
THE VICTORIAN AGE OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

VOL. II

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Writers on Religious and Theological Subjects —
Scientific Writers — Philosophical Writers — The
Younger Poets — The Younger Novelists — Writers
on Art — Later Historians, Biographers, Essayists,
etc., and the present condition of Literature —
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THE VICTORIAN AGE
OF
ENGLISH LITERATURE

BY
MRS. OLIPHANT
AND
F. R. OLIPHANT, B.A.

“The spacious times of great—Victoria”

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

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1892

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CHAPTER I

OF THEOLOGICAL WRITERS

THE state of Ecclesiastical affairs at the beginning of the half-century was full of agitation and confusion. Oxford was the centre of a conflict which extended over the whole kingdom, and which had perhaps a greater effect than any religious movement except the Reformation, throughout England. Both period and movement are dominated by one commanding figure, of whom it can scarcely be said so much that he was a theologian, a controversialist and a religious thinker, as that he was himself—a man of such singular mind, character and personality, that while we think and speak of the works of other men, our minds are occupied, wherever he appears, chiefly with him—John Henry Newman: once a submissive member of the Evangelical school of religious thought, then a believer in the Fathers and the English Church: then a disturbed and

anxious inquirer, wading in deep waters of confusion and uncertainty : afterwards making a casuistical though always sincere attempt to find footing within his own communion upon the rock of the Church which appeared to him the only thing solid on earth : then landing with a sudden impulse, though after long preparation and detachment from all previous ties, upon that rock indeed, but the Rock of Peter, the—as he had slowly come to regard it—unaltered and unalterable foundation of Rome. The excitement with which the world, of which he was the central figure, watched all these evolutions, was like that with which a great drama might be watched, or the performance of an athlete in the classic games. The slowness of the process extending over so many years, the self-concentrated attention of the actor working out step by step in his own mind each lingering detail of the way—himself, as it were, the first and most interested spectator of those processes going on within himself, never flagging in his interest, never drawn aside to any lesser occupation of thought—afforded one of the most wonderful spectacles that has ever been laid open before men. Newman had no sense of humour, no apprehension of that natural perspective which daunts many men, and prevents them from thus concentrating upon themselves their own profoundest interest and observation.

His *Apologia* is perhaps in this sense the most wonderful book that ever was written. There it is apparent that he took himself as much in earnest at the beginning of his career as at the end—was as gravely respectful of his own conclusions as a boy, as of those he reached in maturity of manhood, and that the career of his own mind was to himself the chief epic, drama, history and poem in existence.

It is not necessary here to relate a tale which has already been told so often. The man, who will not die, is to this generation more interesting than those *Tracts for the Times* about which we have already heard so much. That he began, after his first phase of evangelicalism was over, with the conviction that the Church of England was even more truly than Rome Apostolic, purer and better and more trustworthy in divine institution : that he was gradually led to entertain the doubts that arose during a severe course of study and reading on that point, and found no certainty in his former faith, no answer that could satisfy him : and the manner in which that problem was slowly and finally worked out in his mind, is now known more or less to every reader. How completely in his thoughts the question turned upon this : not upon the fundamental truths of religion but upon the Apostolic Succession, the unbroken tradition, the divine commission of the ecclesiastical

body, whose special teachings whatever they might be were comparatively indifferent to him in comparison—is proved by the strange fact that when he finally entered the Church of Rome, he did so quite unsatisfied in his mind about the doctrine of transubstantiation, and very dubious about the worship given to the Virgin and the Saints—matters the ordinary believer would find of first importance: but which to him were as nothing, secondary questions to be fitted into his scheme as best he could, so long as he could plant his foot upon the chief thing, which was the Church, the succession of the Apostles, the foundation of unbroken tradition and fact. There are many now who share that final conviction; there are many who hold Newman's former conviction that the Church of England is as Apostolic (not in character be it remembered but in this unbroken external line) as Rome:—while around stands a whole world wondering that this should have become the chief matter in the eyes of so many Christian men, and that such a mind as Newman's should have encountered what was in fact the loss of all things, the sacrifice of every prepossession, of his traditional surroundings, his previous career, his friends, almost life itself, and adopted the position of a neophyte taught and ruled by much lesser men than himself, in an atmosphere new, strange and foreign to him—for the sake of this

outside matter, a thing external to all private duty and feeling. It was as if a man had expatriated himself, bound himself in foreign laws uncongenial to him, and relinquished his home, because he thought the British constitution after the Reform Bill was no longer the British constitution as it had been before. But the metaphor is a poor one.

It has been suggested that Newman felt his hold of Christian truths so insecure that he fled for refuge to the authority which, so to speak, re-established these truths on its own infallible word and made obedience a duty. We can find no trace of this theory of salvage in his works. It would, it seems to us, be more true to say, that Christian truths were so entirely a matter of course in his mind, that he could push them aside for the consideration of a question which seemed to him more instantly important, *i.e.* whether or not Rome or the Anglican Church was the divinely instituted medium for their extension—and that his convictions were so absolute that he was free to go on to other matters.

This, however, is the fact whatever the internal motive may have been. He occupied years of his life in making every attempt that reason, imagination, and that casuistry which is the mixture of both, were capable of, to demonstrate that his own Anglican Church was the Church of

God *par excellence*. Not succeeding in this he fell into a curious and solemn pause no one can doubt of dejection and suffering—and finally swallowing the difficulties of doctrine, which always held a secondary place in his mind, made the great leap, and lighted upon that Rock, which was not Christ but Peter. In saying this we do not attempt for a moment to throw any doubt upon his devotion to Christ any more than we should think of accusing the Roman Catholic Church of building upon Peter alone. Of that there could be no question. As to the Redeemer of the world he was capable of no mistake. Romish or Anglican he was always a true Christian. On this point he neither admitted nor thought of any controversy. But “upon this rock will I build my church”—what was it? All his studies, all his thinkings, the course of the tide which had carried him on for years, tended towards Rome. And to Rome accordingly he went—with not much less revolution of sentiment and surroundings than if he had died.

Newman was born in 1801, the son of a London merchant, and after an early education conducted chiefly at private schools, had an exceptionally brilliant career at the University, becoming eventually Fellow of Oriel in 1823 at the extraordinarily early age of twenty-two. He withdrew from the English Church in 1845, having

previously given up his post as Vicar of St. Mary's. His later life was spent in the strictest of ecclesiastical circles and in much seclusion from ordinary life, this change having alienated him from many of his dearest friends and even relations—though with the latter, especially with his sisters, his affectionate union had been very warm in early days. He was made a cardinal in 1879, thus receiving the highest acknowledgment the Church of Rome had to give. His power of fascination and of attracting the devotion of others had always been great, and his death in 1890 called forth a burst of almost adulation such as has fallen to the fate of few of his contemporaries.

This singular mind made, as was inevitable, a very great impression upon its generation. The impression was increased by many causes, by Newman's eloquence, the charm of a beautiful style, and the high and elevated tone of reverential and pious thoughtfulness which pervaded his sermons and other non-polemical works; by the very remarkable autobiographical narrative called forth by the attack upon him made by Mr. Kingsley many years after, and in which the public found a tale of mental and spiritual development, the story of a struggle through difficulties with which the common mind could have little sympathy, which was as engrossing as any novel; and finally by his long life, prolonged beyond

the limits of ordinary existence, which hushed every criticism and made the mere fact of him—his age, his fame, his quietude which sought no honours, and the honour which at last and (as was supposed) not very willingly was accorded to him, so many elements in the national history. England and even the English Church, which he did so much to tear asunder, grew proud of Newman. A sort of indiscriminating and blind hero-worship succeeded in the minds of the sons and grandsons of his contemporaries to the wonder and opposition and pain, nay horror, with which their fathers had regarded a mind so unintelligible to the common eye, and actions so injurious to all which he had begun by holding most dear. A saintly old man disarms all criticism, especially when he is one who has the golden mouth of the preacher, and who has breathed into the soul of his generation such a song as "Lead, kindly light"—one of those hymns which form a universal language. Many of his other poems embody the less satisfactory character of his mind and struggle, cravings after Church machinery and rule which are little suitable for verse. The *Dream of Gerontius*, his great poem, has one gleam of inspiration in the ecstasy with which the redeemed soul precipitates itself on the steps of the great white Throne, but it, too, we think is over-full of that machinery of ritual and attendant priests and

concerted songs, which we would fain hope might be dispensed with in the passage from life to death—or rather from death to the better life beyond.

His works were: the greater portion of the *Tracts for the Times* (begun in 1833), embodying the struggle which we have described—and specially Tract XC., published in 1841, the last of the series, which brought to a climax the arguments of the others by an endeavour to prove that the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England did not condemn the doctrines of Rome, but only the “dominant errors” involved, yet not necessarily involved in them; which suggestion of a natural and non-natural sense in religious controversy exceeded the patience and common sense of the English mind unloving of such subtleties. The list, however, is almost too long for these pages. It included Parochial and Plain Sermons, Sermons on Subjects of the Day, University Sermons and others; Treatises on Justification, on Christian Doctrine, on the Idea of a University, on the Grammar of Assent, Essays on Miracles, Essays and Sketches Critical and Historical, a work on the Arians which was the first that confused his ideas of the Church of England, a translation of Athanasius, a number of pamphlets on various theological subjects, a polemical work on the *Via Media*, the half-way ground which many fondly hoped to have found between Rome

and the Anglican Church, and on the difficulties felt by Anglicans in respect to Catholic teaching, another work of the intermediate period. The *Apologia pro vitâ suâ* must always remain one of the most remarkable of human documents, as well as most valuable as an exposition of both the man and the time; though it is so close in narrative, so curiously self-concentrated, as to have, except as a study of human character, comparatively little interest for the general reader. The *Verses on Various Occasions*, to which is added the *Dream of Gerontius*, have been already mentioned. He also wrote another half-auto-biographical work, called *Loss and Gain*, and *Callista*, a story of the early Christians, in some respects a beautiful piece of writing, but singularly inhuman, or rather unhuman in its treatment of the persons of the tale, shutting out all ordinary human sympathies in a curiously characteristic way. Newman died a very old man, Cardinal, tardily but completely recognised and honoured by the Church of Rome, with the greater public organisations of which, however, he never had much to do, confining himself to an almost private sphere. All opposition, reproach or blame had died out long before his death, and that event called forth as we have said a universal and enthusiastic outburst of honour and regret.

As instrumental as Newman in the birth of

the great Anglican movement which has in so many features changed the aspect of the Church of England, was Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800-82), by whose name for some time that movement was called. They were both inspired and encouraged by an older man, the Rev. John Keble (1792-1866), whose *Christian Year* had been published ten years before the great controversy began, one of those rare books of verse which, mingling with the very religion of the country, find their place beside the Bible, and become the daily reading, as well as the only representatives of divine poetry to multitudes incapable of appreciating any other form; but do not thereby lose their power upon the classes more apt to recognise that inspiration for its own sake. His *Lyra Innocentium* and *Lyra Apostolica* were both published within our period, and his name remains an honour to the Victorian age, though his great work was published before it began. Neither to Keble nor to Pusey did the logical necessity of following out their views of Apostolic Succession and a divinely-appointed Church, as far as Rome, appear the only possibility as it did to Newman. Their native Church was to both the Mother to whom they clung with unshaken devotion, notwithstanding all her shortcomings. If Newman did more than either of them to impress that ideal of a Church upon the

national mind and to turn the generation to an increased ritual and a more absolute creed, Keble and Pusey retained the flood within its natural barriers and guided the movement so that it came to no disruption or violent national breach, but re-formed itself within the original lines of the English Church, adding much fervour and spiritual zeal as well as a faith more exalted and often more rigid, and an extreme elevation of the Church as the fount of salvation and its priests and ordinances as the only divinely-appointed ministrants and means of grace to the world. Keble's works were few, including only the collections of poems above mentioned, and some sermons—of a remarkable character, especially that on "National Apostasy." Dr. Pusey was a much more voluminous writer, but except, like Keble, by one or two striking sermons delivered at moments of special importance, he has left little or nothing in literature likely to live in any but ecclesiastical circles.

The Oxford Movement as it is called has produced, especially in our own immediate day and in consequence of the renewed attention concentrated upon it by the death of Newman, a flood of literature, pursuing every incident and every variation of thought and impulse to their origin, or tracing them out to their end. It is to be doubted whether we understand it much

better for all this elucidation. The experience of a long lifetime since has cast many lights upon these workings which were not apparent at the time, and it would be vain to suppose that all that has followed was intended or even thought of, when the minds of such men as those above recorded first turned to an investigation of the historical Church and the differences between Rome and England. The curious accidentalness of all human work, which it is now the fashion to attribute to an automatical development and to force into artificial lines of incubation and descent, was never more clearly marked than in the stumbling from unforeseen step to step of Newman's singular spirit, so great yet so strangely limited, with results as far different as it is possible to imagine from those expected and hoped for. Naturally in the after-light of events, and when the path, however dubious, can be traced back to its starting-point, a very different light is thrown upon those gropings of the struggling soul. Among writers who have contributed to this elucidation or have been otherwise connected with the period in literature may be mentioned the brothers Mozley, both brothers-in-law of Cardinal Newman. The Rev. Thomas Mozley, born in 1806, whose *Reminiscences* of Oxford and other places are full of interest, was for many years largely known and influential as a journalist, especially in connection

with the *Times*. His younger brother, the Rev. James Bowling Mozley (1813-78), a very acute and striking theological writer as well as critic, Bampton lecturer in his day, is less associated with the history of the controversy, but was one of those whose separation from his distinguished relative was most complete. Their sister, Anne Mozley, who, without following Newman, preserved the closest friendship and sympathy with him, and was charged by him with the task of publishing his early letters and notes of his life, has died very recently at an advanced age, a graceful and modest writer, but not upon ecclesiastical subjects. Another name closely connected with Newman is that of William George Ward (1812-82), an enthusiastic sympathiser and follower, whose son's memoir of his life, very recently published, contains a great many details of the controversy.

Among these over-abundant works, elucidating or confusing the history of this important crisis, the book of Dean Church (1815-90), recently published, proceeds from a serious and able mind without partisanship or prejudice. He was a contemporary, though considerably younger, and though not of Newman's school in any way, and of a mind more attuned to literature and its peaceful paths than to polemics, had the fullest means of understanding that time of conflict and was personally in the midst of it, and sympathetic

at least with its leaders. Church was like Newman and Pusey, but at a much later date (1836), a Fellow of Oriel. He was himself a man of much literary activity, chiefly with a theological bent, a greater part of his work consisting of Sermons and lectures on ecclesiastical subjects, one of which was expanded into an excellent *Life of St. Anselm* (published 1871). Perhaps, however, the work by which Dean Church will be most remembered is one which is entirely out of this atmosphere of ecclesiasticism and which we mention here as a digression, the admirable *Essay on Dante*, which has endeared his name to every lover of that great poet.

While this memorable movement was going on in the Church of England, another of a characteristically different kind was in progress in Scotland, with which the great name of Thomas Chalmers is as closely connected as that of Newman is with the Anglican revival. Nothing could well be more unlike, though there is a certain subtle connection in idea between them, than the agitation in the English Church and that in the Scotch. The laborious and anxious endeavour to make out for the Anglican development a full share in the spiritual rank and privileges of unbroken ecclesiastical lineage, ignoring the unfortunate breach of the Reformation, was as foreign to the

Scotch desire and effort to shake itself free of all bondage to the State and to regulate itself by its own laws as a distinct corporation, as was the perpetual preoccupation with Rome and the Fathers on one side, with the assertion of the rights of the people on the other. And yet the leading idea of a kingdom not of this world, a theocracy responsible only to God and its own officers, independent of all domination of Civil law, was the same in both. The Scot made no reference to Rome except in the form of anathema, and acknowledged no spiritual descent from that Antichrist; while to the Englishman the claims of the people to any voice or judgment in the matter were altogether unthought of, an absurdity out of all calculation. Dr. Chalmers and his party went back to John Knox, and the Reformation, and from them with a leap to the most primitive Church of the Apostles, without in the least troubling themselves about descent or lawful succession. In a vulgar practical statement their object was that the people of each parish and congregation should have the right of choosing their own minister—in the ideal and more highly sounding interpretation that Christ's kingdom upon earth should be ruled by His laws and supremacy alone.

It is perhaps an extraordinary claim viewed in the light of all human analogies, that the uninstructed or very partially instructed people

should have the divine right of selecting their own instructors, and is very open to argument, not to say ridicule—but yet it has been the attitude of Scotch Presbyterians for several centuries. And upon this right, denied by the State, which considered itself better able in the person of local patrons to choose these teachers (also a very doubtful question), some five hundred clergymen sacrificed by one general act their position, their homes and their living, a most curious, picturesque and striking testimony to the strength of their belief. The same result followed in the Church of England only in individual cases, which made a great difference in the impressiveness of the movement. The men who “went over to Rome” were mourned as if they had died, and made lamentable breaches in the high places of ecclesiastical power and strength: but they affected the Anglican Church little more than if they had actually died, impoverishing a generation. On the other hand, the Scotch Establishment was rent in two, and for a moment it seemed as if the old framework of the Presbyterian National Church, so hotly fought for, so jealously secured by all the precautions of law, would collapse altogether. Had it done so, as no doubt was hoped, the revolutionary party would have been justified. But a Church disrupted is not like a Church reformed, and the unfortunate result has been

the establishment of a new and powerful religious body, alongside of the old corporation of the Church, which springing stronger from its defeat is now more powerful and living than before. This great *non-sequitur* has completed the confusion and impossibility of forming any ideal of the Church in Scotland, where now there are only Churches in the plural, one in much the same position as the other, save for the not very wealthy endowments, which still confer a certain character and distinction, but which are at the mercy of the revolutionary spirit, should it ever gain the day.

Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847), born of a respectable race in Fifeshire, and who had early proved his superior ability and force both of intellect and character, was, however, a man of too much greatness of mind to be altogether swept away in any such controversy, though unfortunately he never now can be dissociated from it, or judged on his own high standing-ground. He was in his time one of the greatest of religious orators, with a style always extremely different from the polished and chastened oratory of the English pulpit, perhaps less likely to live in a book, and he lingered over by sympathetic readers, but more efficacious and impressive at the moment of speaking, when his northern fervour, sometimes vehemence, the passion of his subject which seized and lifted him above ordinary rules, gained something even from the

accent, the broader vowels and larger utterance which startled southern hearers. In his own country his sway was for a long time supreme. His contributions to literature were almost exclusively Sermons, chief among which were his *Astronomical Discourses* and his (so-called) *Commercial Discourses*, preached on week-days to a congregation of merchants in Glasgow ; along with several works on political economy, one of which in particular, the *Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns*, published in 1821, came with all the greater force and meaning from his pen, that he had himself performed one of the highest offices of a Christian Statesman in triumphantly providing for the poor of a great parish in Glasgow, swarming with the starving and miserable, by a strictly parochial system, taking it entirely out of the hands of any poor-law agencies, and ruling it like an independent kingdom with a budget and revenue of its own, sufficient for itself. This romantic piece of civic and spiritual economy, the formation of an ideal state amid all the squalor of a modern poor and crowded parish, Chalmers made the mistake of thinking applicable to the whole country—which of course it would have been had there been a Chalmers at the head of every district, but was not in ordinary hands. As it was, it was little more than a splendid episode in local history—and one of the greatest achievements of his life.

Chalmers began life in the tranquil position of a Scotch country minister, was afterwards, as has been said, at the head of a great Glasgow parish, where he was prophet, law-giver and benevolent autocrat: after which experiences of busy life he retired into an academical career, holding a Professor's Chair in succession in the Universities of St. Andrews and Edinburgh. When the great controversy in the Church of Scotland arose, he at once placed himself on what was then called the "Non-intrusion" side, analogous, in complete difference, to the High Church movement: and became at once the head and leader of that party, the founder of the new institutions of the Free Church, and especially of the wise and far-seeing expedient of the Sustentation Fund by which the principle of Church endowment was established in opposition to the fluctuating popular sway of what is called the voluntary principle. He became after the Disruption the first Principal of the Free Church College, and died holding that office in 1847.

Another great Scotch preacher but much lesser man was Robert Smith Candlish, a minister of Edinburgh who had much to do with the Free Church movement, and was a most noted and successful public orator, publishing also various collections of sermons. Dr. Cunningham, of the same party, wrote a meritorious, but somewhat

partisan, and not very readable *History of the Church of Scotland*.

It seems almost necessary in speaking of Dr. Chalmers to mention at least the name of Edward Irving, once his faithful and devoted lieutenant, a man of heroic mould, whose impassioned piety and enthusiasm carried him into paths dangerous to life and fame, the result being in his case an early death, but no shadow upon the spotless sincerity and truth of his great yet simple nature. His works in theology, if they can be so called, Sermons and Addresses, are in most cases poems of passionate fervour and an antique touch, as if of the Prophets and Seers. His life and wanderings and works were, however, over before our period begins. Among the foremost of the followers of Chalmers was Thomas Guthrie, a man whose extraordinary success in the pulpit was not attained in the same legitimate way. Honest, devout and philanthropic, eager to lend his hand to every good work, his compositions were not of a kind to brook print. His style was florid and fluent in the highest degree, and the effect he produced upon the large audience he gathered round him was often of the most powerful kind: but the metaphors in which he indulged freely, and which even in the height of his public oratory were seen to be of the most highly differing quality, some full of simple natural poetry, while

the others were forced, extravagant and turbid—became sadly like pinchbeck and tinsel when preserved in a book. It is not an unusual effect with a popular preacher. He was, though not the inventor, at least one of the most successful workers of the Ragged School scheme,* which was hoped in for a time, as so many moral panaceas have been, as a key to the everlasting problem of the social salvation and rescue of the miserable and degraded. Neither in that nor in any other scheme of the kind has the panacea yet been found ; but this was nobly worked by Dr. Guthrie and for a time produced astonishing results. In their generation it was this dissentient and in the formal sense of the word revolutionary party in the Church of Scotland which monopolised all that was most distinguished and greatest in theological teaching and literature. A little later the balance turned, and though Scotland has not yet produced another man worthy to tread in the steps of Thomas Chalmers, the higher level of thought and style and national influence has been found on the other side. To prove this it is scarcely necessary to do more than mention the names of Norman Macleod and John Tulloch ; the former indeed much less of a literary man than of a Churchman (in a sense of that word peculiar in meaning to Scotland), the latter less an ecclesiastic than a man of letters, whose works,

however, are so divided between theology—to which he made several notable additions—and general literature that it is difficult to know in which category to place him.

When these corresponding yet so different movements had passed their respective crises and fallen back into the ordinary course of life, a movement of another kind arose in England among a generation younger than that of Newman and one which felt perhaps the reaction which is inevitable after any strong wave of tendency. It may be said of Frederick Denison Maurice (1805-72) that he was the Newman of this new divergence from rigid doctrine and formal ecclesiastical work and ways. He had that strong defence against excessive Churchmanship, the fact of a Nonconformist parentage, his father having been a Dissenting minister—and the conviction more certainly secured in this way than perhaps in any other, that there was no exclusive standard of goodness or certainty of salvation in any framework of ecclesiasticism, and that the highest faith and piety could exist outside the boundaries of the Church. This conviction did not, however, on the other hand lessen his allegiance to the Church which he had chosen as being the most perfect and desirable form and embodiment of true religion: but that flame of brotherly kindness in him which has been called by a later

writer the Enthusiasm of humanity, made him chafe at the bonds in which faith was limited by so-called Orthodoxy, and long for expansion—a less rigid adherence to the letter, a fuller sympathy with the greater world around, and a softened version of those pains and penalties with which dogma had encircled every divergence from the understood faith. The first strong step which he was supposed to take in the direction of loosening these bonds became visible to ecclesiastical critics in a book of *Theological Essays* which he published in 1853, and in which he doubted or denied the eternal duration of future punishment, the Hell of the doctrinal system. Amid the much greater liberty of thought and speech which now exists it is curious to recall the hot and fierce discussion which this caused, and that a man so pre-eminently Christian as Maurice should have been forced, with all the ignominy which ecclesiastical censure could pour upon him, from his Chair in King's College, London, for the error of doubting whether in the infinite mercy of God any man was permitted to “perish everlastingly,” to be bound in eternal chains and devoted to unending torture. Newman had gone to the verge of an absolute denial of the Church's code of doctrine without any formal ecclesiastical censure, but Maurice's first objection to a point of belief which might, one would suppose, safely be

left aside in the independence of dogma from any absolute relation to practical life, was punished at once and with a high hand. As was natural, however, this punishment rather strengthened than weakened his influence, which was great over kindred minds, and which soon gathered round him a band of liberal thinkers and generous philanthropists—only perhaps too confident in their idea that their broad view of Christianity and eagerness to extend their conviction of the universal Fatherhood of God, and demonstrate the beneficence of all His dealings with man, was a new thing, and at last the great lever which should move the world.

Emancipated from the absolute bondage of ecclesiastical authority which Newman's aim had been to draw tighter and make more real, Mr. Maurice and his party longed and endeavoured to find kindred and fellowship everywhere, to regard every man as a brother who was faithful to the great laws of Christianity, and to show above all, the breadth and elasticity of that Church which was so far from any narrow or sectarian temper that the most differing theories, so long as they held their allegiance to Christ and His all-pervading character and personality, might find rest in her bosom. This new view, which was at the same time an old habit of the mind of English Churchmanship, often exhibited in practical

operation, though perhaps never before formulated, attracted a large portion of the liberal minds and religious spirits of the time. There is a generosity and candour in it which is very attractive. "He that is not against me is for me," our Lord Himself had said, checking the exclusiveness of His first disciples. It was the opposite principle, which is also recorded in the Gospel in different circumstances, "He that is not for us is against us," which was the inspiration of the High Church party. They are both necessary and both authorised in the great credentials of the Christian faith. But the former seems the more generous, the wider and more lovable utterance.

Maurice began life as a journalist and man of letters, attempting even novel-writing, in which he did not succeed: but in 1834 took orders, and after a short experience of a country parish came to London, where he was first Chaplain of Guy's Hospital, and afterwards held the Chair of History and that of Divinity in King's College. When removed from these, in consequence of the heresy attributed to him, he became Chaplain of Lincoln's Inn, and afterwards the incumbent of St. Peter's, Vere Street, a dull old-fashioned church, where without any show, without even eloquence—for his style was always wanting in lucidity as well as grace, and it was often difficult to follow his slightly confused processes of thought

—he diffused round him a view of Christian faith, charity and character which was more influential than argument. Men who were themselves more apt to influence the mass of readers and hearers than he was, were moved and influenced by him in an astonishing way, so much so that he became even more truly than Newman—who deserted at the most critical moment the party which he had formed and fostered—the head of a section of the Church. The name of the Broad Church in opposition to the “High” and “Low” was given, we fear, partly in derision of a movement which sought to ally itself with all that was good wherever found ; but it was sufficiently appropriate to live, and remain as the distinction of a large party, and one specially rich in literary gifts. The quality of breadth has, we can scarcely doubt, gone too far in many cases, rousing a disposition towards novelty and a tendency to adopt every view that seems “liberal” and “advanced” with less regard for its Christian character than for its freedom—which is always the danger of the too open mind. The partial deification of “Honest Doubt” which has encouraged so much fictitious heresy, and dignified so many speculative follies, was the attendant evil of much good ; and the attitude of respectful attention which has been forced upon men of serious judgment in regard to a thousand levities of superficial and childish unbelief, has

sometimes made toleration ridiculous, and cultivated nonsense under the name of thought. But it is impossible in human nature to have great qualities without accompanying defects.

Mr. Maurice's literary works, all more or less Sermons and Lectures reproduced, have not attained any lasting celebrity. His *Doctrine of Sacrifice* is an attempt to show how vicarious suffering is really the rule of life, but was supposed by many to weaken while appearing to defend the principle of the great Atonement. His *Prophets and Kings of the Old Testament* has a clearness and picturesque force of narrative which give it a distinct and attractive place among his many works, since these were gifts by no means common in his writings.

He was the founder of the Working Men's College, an institution in which he himself laboured energetically, giving up much time and incurring much fatigue in this attempt to bring higher education and moral training to the young men of the working classes who had no leisure except in the evening; and also of Queen's College, the first attempt at a more liberal education for women, which has held its ground among all the advanced opportunities of our day. He ended his life in that mild triumph of goodness and a noble aim over all perversities and discouragements, which when it occurs is so strong a consolation to reformers

and lovers of truth—as Professor of Moral Philosophy at Cambridge, his own University, which thus vindicated him from all animadversions.

Frederick William Robertson (1816-53), best known as Robertson of Brighton, was, without being a disciple or in any way a follower of Maurice, a partaker of many of his views, working in the same spirit though without any polemical tendency, and the influence rather of an eloquent preacher and religious thinker than of an innovator in doctrine, or leader in any new development. His Sermons stand more on the level of those earlier Sermons of Newman which were concerned with the details of spiritual and practical life, than of any controversial work; but Robertson had a vein of reflective sentiment, an almost feminine softness, sadness and wistful reflectiveness about him, which had a sympathetic attraction beyond that of any of his contemporaries. He was himself a man hampered in life with weakness and it is said unhappiness, disappointed in many natural aspirations and with an atmosphere of suffering around him. Few things have made a greater or a more universal impression than a Sermon of his upon the disappointments of life, in which he pointed out, with the profound melancholy of a man to whom the brightest prospects have turned out delusive, how God Himself lures on the wistful soul with

promises which are seldom or never practically fulfilled, making of the cloud of witnesses to faith in the Epistle to the Hebrews a pensive band, each proving the fact that notwithstanding all the promises, they remained strangers and pilgrims with no abiding city here, looking always for that which was to come. No fuller, more startling expression of that human dissatisfaction which never has all it wants, nor ever can find perfect solace on earth, has been made from the pulpit. The high spiritual tone, the deep emotion of piety and reverence which fill these sermons, cannot quench the under-current of suffering and sadness which is revealed through them, and which perhaps had its share in making them so acceptable to a host of readers.

A very different man was the young Boanerges of the Broad Church movement, as complete a representative of the joy and strength of life as Robertson of Brighton was of its sadder side, Charles Kingsley, some time rector of Eversley, the embodiment of cheerfulness and vigour, of all the heroic personal qualities, strength, buoyancy and confidence, of whom as a novelist we have already spoken. He was born in 1819 in the generation following that of Maurice and young enough to be in some measure his pupil, formed and influenced by his work, though they do not seem to have come in contact during the formally

educational portion of his life. Maurice's new view of Christian teaching, his impatience of doctrine and system, and desire to go straight to Christ as a personal leader and guide, and his conviction that it was the love of God rather than His wrath which ought to be impressed upon men as their first and all-pervading lesson, in every way answered to the hearty brotherly soul of the young parish priest who felt that only so could the staple of the common parish audience, rich and poor, who were hardened by custom to the routine of sermons and pious exhortation, be roused to a sense of life and reality. His own sermons were found fault with by his bishop as too colloquial, which was what it was his desire they should be, bringing home no distant and alarming Godhead, but a very present Father and friend to the slumbrous soul. To the eager and enthusiastic preacher it almost seemed as if this were a new Gospel. His anxiety to make everything plain, to deal with religious questions with the same simple straightforwardness as if they had been realities of actual life, to reject all mysticism and asceticism and consider men not as souls to be saved, but as beings of flesh and blood as well as of soul and spirit, all equally bound to be consecrated to God and live to His service, gave intensity and reality to all he did and said. He embraced Mr. Maurice's views with all the

enthusiasm of his nature, flinging himself into the controversy about Eternal punishment with the utmost fervour, though it would not seem that he had given any thought or special study to the subject before his leader became involved in that discussion. The eager life and earnestness of such a second in command gave a touch of honest arrogance, if the word may be used, in the midst of so much actual modesty of character and thought, to the new party, so sure as they were that the view they took was altogether new, and almost a fresh revelation to men.

We read almost with a smile how Kingsley rushed up to London in the midst of the great scare about the Chartists in 1848 to place himself on the side of Government, as if he had been an allied army, whose help might be effectual by the side of the imperial forces. It is natural perhaps that all philanthropical workers should exaggerate the effect of their own work, especially upon the classes lower in social order than themselves, with whose habits of mind they are but little familiar. It was chiefly through Mr. Kingsley that his party acquired the title of Muscular Christians, from their anxiety to develop every part of the being, and to add cricket and every wholesome exercise to their methods of ameliorating the lot, and training the minds of working men. The athletic young pastor, leader of his parish no

less on the field of friendly local emulation with bat and ball, than in the pulpit and the school-room, was one of the ideals introduced by the Broad Church ; which also extended a degree of sympathy and acknowledgment to Dissenters, which had been hitherto unknown in the Church of England. The High Church had turned naturally towards Rome, those even who set up most warmly the claims of the English Church to an equally clear Apostolical descent, still feeling their sympathies turn most closely in that direction. The Broad Church, on the other hand, extended its arms of fellowship on the other side, sometimes with a demonstrative liberality which conveyed some sense of condescension. The Dean of Westminster, Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, distinguished in so many other ways, who was if not actually a leader of the Broad Church party at least so strong a champion and supporter that he may be said to have been its representative to society and the world, was specially noted for the liberal feeling, which went almost the length of a partiality for all novel and out-of-the-way beliefs and for the dissentient mind in general, from Père Hyacinthe, the revolutionary French Catholic, to the last professor of Honest Doubt in his own country. It was indeed the drawback to much excellent work in the section of the Church, represented by these admirable names, that it made

Doubt a sort of first element of Faith, and counted nothing heroic in Christian endeavour which had not first passed by that fiery passage—an encouragement to fictitious sentiment of which it would be difficult to exaggerate the power.

Kingsley's sermons, though successful in their appeals to the higher feelings and enthusiasms of his hearers, and full of an elevated and generous sympathy with everything true, noble, worthy and of good report, have not taken any place in literature. His important works are all of a different kind, and have already found mention elsewhere.

The theological writers of the earlier part of our half-century thus resolve themselves into the originators and supporters of three great ecclesiastical movements. The first was that of Newman and Pusey, which resulted in an external change so great that it is difficult for the younger reader to realise how completely the aspect of the Church has been changed under its influence, an advance or restoration of the most radical kind in ritual, an elevation of old standards and claims which had been cast into obscurity, and altogether a reassumption both of outward economy and doctrine, which fundamentally altered the position of a Church which hitherto had been content to call itself Protestant. The second, that of Dr. Chalmers and his party in Scotland, moving in a similar

direction but with very different results, to establish the spiritual dominion of an ideal Church in combination with the most democratic demands of a positive and unideal people—was only in one sense a return to ancient principles, since these principles, though entertained in theory, had never before been carried out, as they were then inaugurated, and as they now exist everywhere in Scotland. The third was that of Maurice and the Broad Church, in itself a revolt against the Romanising party, and attempt to establish a warmer human sympathy among Christians, and a truer apprehension of the humanity of the Gospel, the Fatherhood, Brotherhood, not merely priesthood and Church institution, which are the foundations of all our hope and consolation.

To these objects much of the theological literature of the age was devoted, especially the works of the greatest literary power among these men of the time, the singular genius of Newman. There remain indeed several of his works, his earlier volumes of Sermons which are the common property of the world, and some of his historical studies: but all the more characteristic portion of his work is deeply marked with this struggle, and the curious biography of a soul which is given in the *Apologia*, and which can never be without its interest to the more serious reader, is a biography of the conflict as well as of its

leader. Chalmers's works, though their grand and swelling eloquence has gone out of fashion, are scarcely at all polemical, and belong to the serious literature of the age. The sermons of Robertson of Brighton retain their catholic (in another sense of the word) character, and are still largely read, and independent of the great change and progress of ideas. Those of Maurice and the theological works of Kingsley have scarcely lasted so well, or established any such claim.

Ireland took little if any part in these religious conflicts. Archbishop Whately had carried his fine literary skill, his humour and keen intelligence thither, but scarcely wrote anything after Her Majesty's accession. His successor Archbishop Trench was full of literary activity and productiveness but not of the theological kind. It is needless to add that in the Church of England (as well as in the dissenting bodies) Irishmen have always ranked among the most popular preachers. The Roman Catholic writers of Ireland have been few and none have attained anything beyond a strictly local fame. Cardinal Wiseman, who represented the Church of Rome in England during the exciting and critical movement of so-called Papal Aggression—the Pope's remarkable stroke of policy in appointing Bishops and Archbishops with English titles, a proceeding so hotly resented at the time, so calmly acquiesced in since—made

two or three contributions to literature not of a very high order, of which his work on the *Last Four Popes* was probably the most valuable as *mémoires pour servir*, while his story of the early Christian era and the Roman Catacombs, *Fabiola*, is perhaps the most widely known.

It is perhaps a little out of place to reckon Francis Newman, born 1805, the brother of the Cardinal, as a theological writer, yet we cannot omit to mention *The Soul: its Sorrows and Aspirations* and *Phases of Faith*, in which the revolt of the mind from his brother's high doctrines of the Church, and the equally high though very different Evangelical theology in which both had been brought up—and finally from Christian doctrine altogether, is set forth with an energy that made them somewhat notable for the moment, as is the fate of such protests, which are like bubbles on the stream of religious faith and literature. Even now, when the tide is strong in their favour, nothing can be more curious than to mark how the literature of revolt drops aside into eddies and stray currents, and gets landed high and dry to mark a date, while the stream flows on. Mr. Froude's *Nemesis of Faith*, though none will doubt its literary charm, has had the same fate. Such works are received often with alarm, always nowadays with almost exaggerated respect, and make circles and dimplings of interest round them for a

time. But the results that are feared and hoped drop with them, and the general mind forgets that they have ever been. Mr. Francis Newman, whose list of works is almost too numerous for these limited pages and whose learning is said to be extraordinary, has quite recently produced a little book upon the early years of his great brother which every generous reader will deplore and endeavour to forget.

It is scarcely necessary to add that the number of clergymen who have published sermons in all branches of the Christian Church is innumerable, and that it is hopeless to attempt any record of them here. The Rev. T. Binney (1798-1874) of the Weighhouse Chapel, for instance, an extremely popular preacher, published many successive volumes during the years of which we have attempted to give a brief summary. One of his latest publications was a sermon entitled *How to make the best of both Worlds*, which we fear called forth more jibes than reverential attention, and has become a sort of proverb used by many who have little idea from whence it came, and with what serious and pious meaning it was first given forth.

To enter upon any list or account of the many living writers both on the orthodox and opposing side who have lately thrown themselves into the critical discussion of the canon of the Bible would

require a volume in itself, and one too of a very unsatisfactory kind. A following generation will be better able to sift the valuable metal from the abundant dross of these endless and so often conjectural discussions. The most valuable work perhaps on the orthodox side is that done by Dr. Lightfoot (1828-89), who died Bishop of Durham, after having filled many important offices both in the Church and university. He was a scholar of the most painstaking and patient kind, not disturbed in the sober processes of research and investigation by any heat of theory, wholly engaged in clearing out the encumbered ways, and following every clue which led to a better understanding of historical and spiritual truth—a work less picturesque than that of the popular leaders whose names have moved the public, yet perhaps even more important, though without any gift of literary eloquence or grace. His great work on St. Ignatius and St. Polycarp, and his commentaries on St. Paul's Epistles, especially that to the Galatians, take almost if not altogether the highest rank among the purely theological writings of the age. Such works afford less ground for description or comment than many of the religious books that attract the ordinary reader; but their weight and superlative merit—in a sphere which is so full of eager and ambitious assailants capable of playing at their will upon the ignorance

of the world—have never been gainsaid, and are scarcely to be over-estimated.

We may also note the valuable work of Dean Alford (1810-71) in his edition of the Greek New Testament, in which the text has been carefully revised by the aid of all the real lights attainable. Dean Alford was a man of great accomplishments and culture, the author of several poetical and other works of a lighter description in his earlier years. His name, however, will be chiefly associated with this work, to which he dedicated a considerable portion of his life. Its publication was begun in 1841, and not completed till 1861. Much of what is called the new school of criticism did not exist when it was begun, and even at the conclusion of the twenty years' labour, had been but little discussed in England ; but there has been no better or more careful editor or annotator of the text of the Gospels, upon which all questions and discussions must be founded.

A work of no serious value but of more popular range was the *Pictorial Bible*, projected by the enterprising publisher Charles Knight and placed by him in the hands of the Rev. John Kitto (1804-54), a writer of considerable knowledge and industry, as editor. Dr. Kitto's work consisted chiefly of illustrative notes treating of the customs and countries of the East, the local peculiarities of Palestine and those habits of

Eastern life which are so long-enduring, and which throw so much light upon the histories both of the Old and of the New Testament. Doctrine or exposition was not much in Dr. Kitto's way. His manner of illustration from actually existing circumstances and places was at the period of its production highly thought of as an effectual means of illustrating Scripture, and giving additional reality to many passages which refer to the unchanging customs of Oriental life and the antique world.

In discussing the various movements in the Church which were connected with literature it would be impossible to leave out the publication entitled *Essays and Reviews*, a work consisting of seven different papers by clergymen of the Church of England in which for the first time the great modifications of belief which had arisen in respect to what is called the literal inspiration of the Scriptures, and other cognate views, were proclaimed from the midst of the Church herself in a manner very offensive and alarming to the general mass of Churchmen, and in a large degree to the reading public of the time. It is a curious evidence of the speed at which we travel, that the discussions raised in these essays, which excited so great a commotion at the time of their publication, would not shock any one now, whether accepted or not, and that many to whom the Scriptures are no

less dear than ever, have ceased to limit the meaning of inspiration to absolute dictation from on high. The authors of the *Essays and Reviews* were Dr. Temple (born 1821), then the Head-master of Rugby, now Bishop of London; Professor Jowett (1817), then a fellow and tutor of Balliol College, now its Master; Dr. Rowland Williams (1817-70), Professor Baden Powell (1796-1860), the Rev. H. B. Wilson, Mr. C. W. Goodwin and the Rev. Mark Pattison (1813-84), afterwards Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford. Of these only Mr. Jowett and Dr. Pattison have left an enduring name in literature. The Master of Balliol is chiefly known for his admirable translations from the classics, which it is unnecessary to mention here: the Rector of Lincoln principally by his memoir of Casaubon, and by his autobiographical sketches. Though neither will perhaps be ranked as typical Churchmen or orthodox writers, their share in the *Essays and Reviews* were the only revolutionary productions to which they have committed themselves, and even in these their share was small. Mr. Baden Powell cannot be considered in any sense of the word as a theological writer. The *Essays and Reviews* were published in 1860. Two years later Bishop Colenso of Natal (1814-83) made an attack upon the Pentateuch—*The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua critically examined*—under

the inspiration of one of the native Zulus whom he had been sent to convert, but who on the contrary influenced in a remarkable manner this candid Apostle. As the ground taken was very much an arithmetical one, and specially founded on the extraordinary numerical lists of Exodus, a characteristic mode of criticism for a mathematician, which had been Dr. Colenso's previous character and distinction—a considerable amount of humorous observation was attracted among the general public, and this new version of *Colenso's Arithmetic* so well known to all the schools, as well as the singular and whimsical circumstance of the awakening of a Bishop's mind by a Zulu, was received by the ordinary reader with almost more amusement than seriousness. Naturally the case was very different in the Church, and the publication gave rise to many heated discussions and proceedings. The book has not lived in literature any more than the *Essays and Reviews* have done: but their statements and arguments no doubt have had a share in producing the present state of public feeling, which has gone so many steps beyond the Honest Doubt of an earlier period, and made Agnosticism the fashionable religion, not only of many who are sincerely incapable of other belief, but of a still greater number who like the sensation of being wiser and specially more intellectual than their

neighbours. Readers who regard these matters from another point of view may take comfort in the thought that that which is the fashion to-day falls into the dreariest of antiquated modes to-morrow; and that there is nothing in which the continually turning whirligig of human opinion is more certain to change.

It is wholly impossible in the limited space at our command to give anything like a list of the innumerable multitude of clergymen and ministers of religion who have published sermons, and thus added to the bulk of religious literature a number of books of which we might almost say that had they been preserved the whole world would not be sufficient to contain them. But fortunately these publications of a very large class who are compelled by the necessities of their profession to constant literary production, more or less bad and good, drift away with the tide, and are scarcely perceptible in permanent literature. The theological writings of our own immediate day are chiefly concerned in attack and defence of the Bible by means of that so-called New Criticism, which, after surging about the earliest of secular literature, attacking and defending, for instance, in the self-same way the unity and authenticity of Homer, with the result of proving at the end that there is no certain word to be said on that matter, has now turned to the venerable records of the

Scriptures with the design of proving that these books are a shabby jumble of antique rubbish, bits of broken history and legend mixed up with comparatively modern commentaries and interpretations. Nothing can be more seductive to the critic than to feel himself able thus to demolish any fabric, and the process is often very ingenious and gives exercise to the cynical imagination and analytical powers on which our age prides itself, more perhaps than anything else could do. It will remain probably for another age to decide, when the smoke and dust have a little subsided, what the work of the iconoclast is worth, and whether Jeremiah or Isaiah is more destructible than Homer.

There is, however, another class of writers less destructive who seek like Newman, though in a very different sense, to establish a *via media* of half-truths between the revolutionary and the conservative: among whom we may mention the name of Professor Seeley, who published in 1865 a work called *Ecce Homo*, one of the earliest of the many attempts to explain the life of Jesus Christ on another hypothesis than that of the Gospels, which have employed so many ingenious minds with, in some cases, a very large amount of acceptance with the public. The book was published anonymously and was extraordinarily successful, somewhat as *Robert Elsmere* has been,

with a similar cause. It was full of eloquence, and preached with much fervour the "Enthusiasm of Humanity" as a substitute for that love of God and of man which is the inspiration of Christianity. We believe that it has fallen almost completely into oblivion, and that few at least of the younger readers of the day would recognise the "Enthusiasm of Humanity" even as a name. The altruism of James Hinton, whose theory bore some resemblance to Professor Seeley's, has better borne the action of time.

A different yet not dissimilar impulse has led others to attempt to support the cause of religion by an anxious endeavour to compare and identify the laws of the spiritual with those of the natural world, to the great encouragement of many anxious believers who are eager to find semi-scientific reasons for the faith with which they are unwilling to part. We might mention the great impression produced, at its moment, by the work of Professor Henry Drummond, *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, as an instance of this—and many more might be given.

It is with no disrespectful meaning that we place at the end of this list the name of a man whose life has been spent in the literature of religion, yet for whom it is difficult to find any place among theologians, properly so called. His influence has been rather among a refined and

thoughtful class of indiscriminate readers than of the kind which moves either the general mind or any corporate community. James Martineau, one of the most graceful and accomplished of writers on religious subjects, the younger brother of the well-known Harriet Martineau, and a man of much finer and more refined genius than that practical and successful woman, was born in 1805. His mind has been always able to abide in the mild Unitarianism in which he was born, and which has always proved attractive to a certain order of intellects, though the keen and logical perceptions of his sister found its position midway between the entire acceptance and denial of the Redeemer to be less tenable than either side of that great controversy. James Martineau has, however, been the Apostle of that faith, and has published many volumes of essays and sermons full of the beauty of Christianity, and in which it would be difficult for the ordinary reader to discover any difference between his view of our Lord and that which is the centre of Christian faith. His published writings began in 1836 with a book entitled the *Rationale of Religious Inquiry*, and since that time he has gone on from year to year with many studies, essays and addresses on religious subjects, all distinguished by the same admirable literary power and warm religious feeling, and keeping up the same refined

uncertainty of meaning, so that he has been the teacher and almost guide of many to whom the chief tenet of his faith is abhorrent—a singular position to be held for so great a number of years. Lately, however, Mr. Martineau seems to have yielded in a great degree to the suggestions of what is called the Higher Criticism, and in his last work went so far as to assert that the divine words which have given comfort to so many souls: “Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden : take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly of heart”—cannot be genuine, since no man could have so expressed himself without an incomprehensible breach of the law of humility ; which is a most curious example of the intellectual twist by which one of the most noble and characteristic arguments of the Christian can be turned the other way. Though an old man, he still continues to write, and cannot therefore be treated as one of those who have completed their career. He has received all the honours of the schools, from American degrees to the D.D. of Edinburgh, and D.C.L. of Oxford, though he was not trained in any university.

CHAPTER II

OF SCIENTIFIC WRITERS

IN no respect has the age of which we are writing been so conspicuous as in the progress of scientific learning and discovery. With these, as with all the wonderful inventions that have grown out of the new diffusion of scientific knowledge, we have little to do, in a work which is busied with literature alone. Science, however, has not yet discovered a method of setting its new truths before the public which is half so successful or half so durable as that offered by literature ; consequently we feel ourselves bound to devote some attention to the books of men of science, though it is a subject which we approach with diffidence and with some difficulty. We feel something of the same abashed respect with which honest Captain Cuttle regarded the oracular Bunsby. "Bunsby," he said, "you carry a weight of knowledge easy as would swamp one of my tonnage soon." It

is much in the same spirit that we are inclined to look upon the literature of science, the more that we find it usually to contain as much science and as little literature as can conveniently be included within the boards of a book. We are only capable of taking cognisance of the few stray literary graces that may have crept in here and there when the muse of science nodded and the writer was off his guard, or must confine ourselves to such popular expositions as may be written down to the literary level. Thus, our estimate of the value of a scientific book need not be in any way proportioned to the knowledge it contains, having more to do with the manner in which that knowledge is conveyed to the public. For the same reason, we should set aside a great number of the most valuable of such works, just as we should reject any other purely technical treatise. Babbage's *Table of Logarithms*, for instance, is a highly valuable work, no doubt, and so is *Cavendish on Whist*; but we do not include either in the category of literature.

Among the most prominent figures in the scientific world at the commencement of the reign was one also well known in wider fields of literature. David Brewster was born in 1781 and educated at his father's school in Jedburgh and at Edinburgh University. When quite young he began to write for the *Edinburgh Magazine*, of

which he was appointed editor in 1802. He had chosen for a career the Church, was licensed as a preacher in 1804 and preached his first sermon in the West Kirk of Edinburgh in the same year. But his constitutional nervousness made every appearance in the pulpit a severe trial to him, and he soon gave up his clerical duties, and returned to the quieter path of private tuition. Meanwhile his scientific acquirements had become known and he was advanced as a candidate for the vacant professorship of mathematics, to which, however, Sir John Leslie's much higher claims secured his election. A similar appointment at St. Andrews was also thought too good for Brewster by the electors. He continued his work quietly, making his first mark with a paper on the "Properties of Light" addressed to the Royal Society, which was followed by his well-known contributions to the *Transactions* of the same body on the "Polarisation of Light." The *Edinburgh Magazine*, which after several changes of name became known as the *Edinburgh Journal of Science*, he continued to edit for many years, himself contributing many articles, especially on his special subject of optics. He was also a constant contributor to the *Edinburgh* and *North British Reviews*, and wrote occasionally in the *Quarterly*. To Murray's *Family Library* he contributed a *Life of Sir Isaac Newton* as well as his

famous *Letters on Natural Magic*, which is in its way a work almost without an equal. Among his later works were his *Martyrs of Science* and his *More Worlds than One*, an answer to some opinions advanced in Whewell's *Plurality of Worlds*. Brewster was also remarkable as the principal founder of the British Association, and was one of the members of the first Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland. He was overwhelmed with academical honours from all quarters, was knighted and received the Hanoverian order from William IV. In 1838 he was appointed Principal of the United College of SS. Salvator and Leonard in the University of St. Andrews, and some twenty years later became Vice-Chancellor of Edinburgh University. He lived to a good old age, dying in 1868 at the age of eighty-six. Brewster was a very well-known figure in the society of both Edinburgh and London and had a considerable influence in the world of letters generally. In Maclise's picture to which we have already referred we see him figuring among the brilliant band of writers who enlisted under Maginn, in the service of *Fraser's Magazine*.

A kindred spirit, at first the *protégé* and afterwards the friend of Brewster throughout life—with the exception of a short period in which they were brought into personal rivalry—was

James David Forbes, known to science as the discoverer of the polarisation of heat. Born in 1809, the son of Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo and of the lady who was the object of Sir Walter Scott's early love, Forbes was nearly thirty years younger than Brewster, to whose notice he was brought by some scientific articles contributed at an early age to the periodical of which the latter was editor. By his advice, the young man took up science as a profession instead of the Bar, for which he had been originally intended, and with Brewster's aid soon became a well-known figure in the new circle to which he was thus introduced, being one of the earliest supporters of his friend's great enterprise, the founding of the British Association. In 1833 he appears, perhaps not very gratefully, as the opponent—and the successful opponent—of Brewster for the Chair of Natural Philosophy at Edinburgh, which had become vacant by Sir John Leslie's death. Brewster, who had already been rejected once for this appointment, appears to have felt himself much aggrieved by the conduct of Forbes, but their friendship was afterwards resumed as warmly as ever. Forbes was extremely successful as a lecturer, and introduced some valuable reforms into the University. In the summer of 1840 he spent his vacation in Switzerland and the Alpine districts of Savoy, where he commenced his

valuable inquiries into the nature of glaciers. The same study led him to visit the Isle of Skye, where he discovered indisputable traces of glaciers, and at a later period Norway. In 1843 appeared his great book, *Travels through the Alps of Savoy and other Parts of the Pennine Chain, with Observations on the Phenomena of Glaciers*. Forbes was gifted with the literary quality in a high degree, and his books will always offer pleasant and entertaining reading to the least learned reader. With perhaps the exception of Darwin's *Voyage of the Beagle*, we could not mention a work in which the truths of science are set forth in a more attractive form. He was the author of several other works on the glacier question as well as of various treatises on heat, and on other matters of physical science. On the resignation of Brewster in 1859, Forbes was appointed to the principalship of the United College at St. Andrews, where his name is still honoured as that of a learned and able teacher, a loyal supporter of all that was good in the University, and, perhaps as much as anything else, a chief agent in the restoration of the beautiful College Church. He died on the last day of the year 1868, some ten months later than his old friend Brewster.

In the great revival of science at the commencement of our period, our attention is naturally

drawn to the very remarkable progress of the sciences of geology and physiology, in which the workers of a generation ago have achieved as great a revolution of thought as has ever been seen in all the history of knowledge. Progress, indeed, was cautious at first, but we find by the beginning of the reign that considerable steps had already been taken, especially in the realm of geological inquiry. Among the pioneers in this field we should give a prominent place to William Buckland. Born in 1784, and educated at Tiverton, Winchester and Corpus, Oxford, where he graduated in 1805, he took orders immediately after taking his degree, but remained at the University for many years, becoming a Fellow of his college and being appointed in 1813 Reader in Mineralogy and subsequently, when the Chair was founded in 1818, Reader in Geology to the University. His college duties were diversified by geological explorations, in the course of which he traversed on horseback a great part of the south of England, guiding himself by the maps then recently published by William Smith, the so-called "father of geology" in England. Buckland made his first signal success with an inaugural address, pronounced on coming into his geological Readership, which dealt with the relations of the new geological researches to the religious beliefs which they were supposed to contravene. He was, to his great credit, one of the first to show

that the new discoveries, if properly regarded, only served to heighten the original conception of the Creator's work. This position he maintained throughout life, as is exemplified in his principal work, *Geology and Mineralogy considered with reference to Natural Theology*, in its original form one of the Bridgewater Treatises written in accordance with the will of Francis, last Earl of Bridgewater, who left £8000 as a reward for the best treatise on the "Goodness of God as manifested in the Creation." The President of the Royal Society, who was charged with the administration of the bequest, divided this sum among the writers of eight treatises, including, besides Buckland, Sir Charles Bell, Dr. Chalmers, and Dr. Whewell. Buckland's other chief work was the *Reliquiæ Diluvianæ*, in which he tried to fix the period of the bones found in the caves of Kirkdale in Yorkshire and in other parts. In 1845 he was appointed to the Deanery of Westminster; he died in 1856. A perhaps wider reputation was gained by his son, the late Francis Trevelyan Buckland (1826-80). Frank Buckland, as he was universally called, inherited not only his father's genial humour and many kindly qualities, but also his love of science, which in the son was directed to the study of natural history. As an author he is chiefly known by his *Curiosities of Natural History* (1857-72); he was also for some

time one of the leading writers in the *Field*, and afterwards the originator and for many years editor of that journal's principal rival, *Land and Water*.

Among the geologists of the earlier part of the reign it would be unfair to omit the name of Gideon Algernon Mantell (1790-1852), author of the *Fossils of the Southdowns*, who gained much distinction by his researches in the Sussex cretaceous formations. A more remarkable figure is that of Sir Charles Lyell, the distinguished son of a not obscure father, Charles Lyell, the botanist of Kirriemuir. The younger Charles was born in 1797 and educated at Exeter College, Oxford, where he sat at the feet of Buckland and, catching his teacher's enthusiasm, cast the legal profession for which he had begun to study to the winds and devoted himself to the pursuit of geology. At an early age he produced the great work of his life, the highly valuable *Principles of Geology*, which appeared between 1830 and 1833. The *Principles of Geology* is by no means light reading, but as a work of science it ranks deservedly high ; in the days when it first appeared it was probably rendered more attractive by the delicately heretical flavour, which added a charm to all similar researches in those days but has now become too much a matter of course to interest any one. In later life Lyell produced other works of great

value, dealing with his travels in North America, the geology of which he was able to illustrate as no other writer has done by comparison with his immense knowledge of European formations. He became a ready convert to the Darwinian theory, and published in 1863 a contribution to its literature, entitled the *Geological Evidences of the Antiquity of Man; with Remarks on Theories of the Origin of Species by Variation*. From the Crown Lyell received, as an acknowledgment of his services to science, first a knighthood and then a baronetcy, as well as various rewards from the University of Oxford and other learned bodies. We may say at once that, short of publishing a special supplement to this book, we have no space to enumerate the academical honours showered upon our leading men of science, and must content ourselves with recording those which Her Majesty has distributed among them with no sparing hand. Literature dissociated from scientific ends has not been so fortunate.¹ Lyell died in 1873.

Another member of the chivalry of science whom it is natural to associate with Lyell was Sir Roderick Murchison. Born in 1792 of a good

¹ It is only fair to say that, since this was written, some amends have been made at least to periodical literature, Her Majesty having, by the advice of the outgoing Premier, conferred baronetcies upon the *Globe* and the *Daily Telegraph*, and knighted the *Quarterly Review*.

Highland family, Murchison originally took up the profession of arms, and, obtaining a commission in the 36th Regiment, served through a considerable part of the Peninsular War. On the conclusion of peace in 1814, he left the army and betook himself to the study of geology. In company with the distinguished geologist Adam Sedgwick (1786-1873), he made valuable explorations in the Highlands and in Wales, spreading his investigations later to Scandinavia and Russia, where he was employed by the Czar Nicholas to direct a geological survey of his empire. The knowledge thus acquired was laid before the world in his *Geology of Russia and the Ural Mountains*, which is chiefly remarkable for his argument deduced from structural resemblances of the gold districts of the Ural Mountains to the geological formations in eastern Australia, that gold was to be found in the latter country. For some years Murchison continued to importune the colonial authorities to put his assumption to the test, but without success. Gold was found later, by unofficial searchers, and Sir Roderick—he had been knighted on his return from Russia, and was made a K.C.B. in 1863 and a baronet three years later—had only the comfort of reflecting that he had been right when the public had forgotten all about his predictions. In 1854 he produced his great work, *Siluria: a History of the oldest Rocks*

in the British Isles and other Countries, a treatise of great value, but somewhat difficult of perusal to any but the most earnest inquirer. Murchison displayed much skill as one of those "earthly godfathers" who roused the spleen of Biron, but who are regarded with gratitude by students of science—the Silurian, Laurentian, and Permian series being all baptized by him. He died in 1871.

Scientific research was certainly considered in pre-Girtonian days as chiefly the province of the male of the human species. An exception to this rule was, however, supplied in the case of Mrs. Somerville. Mary Fairfax—to give her original name—was born at Jedburgh in 1780, her father being a naval officer of distinction from whom she perhaps inherited her natural interest in mathematical studies. She was twice married, in 1804 to Samuel Greig, an officer in the Russian service, and after his death to her cousin Dr. William Somerville in 1812. Mr. Greig seems hardly to have appreciated the advantages of a scientific wife, but Dr. Somerville was of another mind and encouraged her in her abstruse studies. Her first public appearance was through the medium of a paper contributed to the *Transactions* of the Royal Society on the "Magnetising Power of the more Refrangible Solar Rays." Mrs. Somerville became interested in the movement for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, and, at the suggestion of Lord

Brougham, prepared a translation — or rather adaptation — of Laplace's *Mechanism of the Heavens* for the Society. It extended, however, beyond the limits assigned to their publications and was issued independently in 1831. In 1834 appeared her *Connection of the Physical Sciences*, a work of considerable merit covering a very large field of knowledge and written in a not unattractive style. To this succeeded in 1848 her *Physical Geography*, in which the standard established by her former book was well maintained, and other minor works showing an immense amount of research in the most abstruse branches of science. After her death, which occurred in 1872, some very charming *Personal Recollections* were published under the editorship of her daughter. One of the new ladies' Halls at Oxford has been appropriately called after her.

One of the most striking figures in connection with geological science, though perhaps not one of those whose researches have led to the most important results, was the self-taught Hugh Miller. Born at Cromarty in 1802, his father the master of a small trading sloop, Hugh Miller himself worked with his hands for his living, his trade being that of a stone-mason. This, however, was chiefly by his own choice. His family—consisting of the two uncles of whom he has left such charming pictures in *My Schools and Schoolmasters*

—had wished to send him to college as a preparation for taking up one of the learned professions, but the boy himself—excited by the example of a cousin who, having taken up the same trade, was only able to work in the summer season and spent his long winter holidays in literature and geology—stuck to his determination. Conscious, however, that “literature and mayhap natural science were, after all, my proper vocation,” he resolved to study hard in the intervals of his work. Geology had already attracted him, and as a boy he wandered about the sea-worn rocks of the Cromarty coast, studying the great book of Nature and identifying for himself the different formations he came upon, though so entirely without book knowledge that he had no names to give them and could find no better expedient than to designate the simple rocks by single numbers and the compound ones by combinations of numbers. His new trade facilitated his studies, for the Cromarty mason of those days was expected to work in the quarries, and in the old red sandstone in which he worked he found much to observe and to learn. All the poetry in his nature was stimulated at the same time by the views over “the upper reaches of the Cromarty Firth, as seen, when we sat down to our mid-day meal, from the gorge of the quarry, with their numerous rippling currents, that, in the calm,

resembled streamlets winding through a meadow, and their distant gray promontories, tipped with villages that brightened in the sunshine ; while, pale in the background, the mighty hills, still streaked with snow, rose high over bay and promontory, and gave dignity and power to the scene."

It was not, however, till after some ten years of hard work that Hugh Miller could do more than write occasional verses. The first outside encouragement he got was from Robert Carruthers, the editor of the *Inverness Courier*, who printed some verses of Miller's in his newspaper and helped him to bring out a volume of *Poems written in the Leisure Hours of a Journeyman Mason*. To this succeeded immediately some letters on the herring fishery republished from the *Courier*. Neither work was a particular success at first, but the attention of some liberal-minded persons of high position was attracted, and Miller was strongly urged by some of them to go to Edinburgh and try to make his way by literature alone. He refused this suggestion, partly from doubts of success, partly from the conviction that he was doing better for himself by quietly increasing his store of scientific knowledge, and waiting for the fuller development of his powers. Perhaps it would have been best for him to have continued even longer at his stone-cutting in the quiet north. In 1835 he received an entirely unexpected

and practically inexplicable appointment as accountant of a branch of the Commercial Bank of Scotland, which he retained for four or five years. About the same time appeared his *Scenes and Legends of the North of Scotland*, which were much applauded and gave him a thorough introduction to the world of literature. He wrote much for periodicals, and in 1840 was appointed editor of the *Witness*, a newspaper started by the Non-Intrusion party in the Church of Scotland, at the suggestion of Dr. Candlish.

At this point of his career the autobiography contained in *My Schools and Schoolmasters* comes to an end. The life that was before him could perhaps not have been so delightfully told. It was not a time of happiness, though it contained all his principal works. The strain of very hard mental work, following upon years of great bodily exertion, and perhaps most of all the change from one to another, produced an effect upon his health, against which he struggled valiantly for many years, but which at last upset the balance of his mind. He retained the traces of his peasant origin, something as Burns may have done, in a certain heaviness, illuminated by brilliant poetic eyes, and a courtesy of manner, especially to women, which we call "of the old school," and which, got out of books and the imagination, is almost characteristic of the rustic genius. He

died by his own hand on Christmas Eve, 1856. His principal scientific works were the *Testimony of the Rocks*, which deals with the much-disputed questions of the relations of geology and theology ; *Old Red Sandstone*, a series of papers republished from the *Witness*, which were received with great applause by the scientific world ; and the *Footprints of the Creator*. The scientific value of these works is generally acknowledged ; their literary merit is hardly less marked. Though his verses were never particularly successful, Hugh Miller was a thorough poet at heart. Metre was not the most suitable vehicle for the expression of his thoughts, and it was not yet the custom to cut up prose into lines of unequal length with capital letters at the beginning and call that poetry. But in his power of picturesque and fervid prose, he may at least claim a high rank among poetical writers.

Few of the works of which we have hitherto spoken produced so great a sensation as greeted the appearance of the anonymous *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*. Of Robert Chambers, the author, we have already given some account. This work, which drew down upon its at first unknown author a perfect avalanche of ecclesiastical censure, was perhaps the boldest and most outspoken account of the origin of nature, as we know it, that had yet been published, but it substantially advanced little that was especially

new. The most risky speculations of the author had been adventured already in each separate department of science. What Chambers was left to do was to make, as he himself says, "the first attempt to connect the natural sciences into a history of creation." The *Vestiges* dealt successively with the formation of the solar system, that of the earth itself with all its successive formations and the kinds of life to be found in each, the origin of all animated tribes and the early history of mankind. The book was undoubtedly conceived in a reverent spirit; it professed to give a wider and nobler view of the Creator's work than that which was ordinarily accepted. But the writer evidently knew, if only by the elaborate precautions that he took to conceal the authorship, that it would raise a storm of criticism. Indeed to those who regarded the Mosaic account of the creation as the authoritative description revealed by God Himself of the various steps of the process, there was something peculiarly offensive in the manner in which the writer appeared to assume the part of one who was in the Creator's confidence. Such, of course, was not the intention of Chambers, who took particular pains to show that his theory was not contradictory to that propounded in Genesis, that, on the contrary, such expressions as "Let there be light," "Let the waters bring forth the moving creature that hath

life," etc., represented "all the procedure as flowing from commands and expressions of will, not from direct acts," and that, according to his view, the order of creation indicated by scientific research coincided with that given in the Mosaic record ; but these protestations did not avail him. The world of Edinburgh still stuck to the six days and nights of twenty-four hours each, and ordered science to get behind them. Nor was mankind yet educated up to the pitch of regarding itself as merely the typical group, to use Macleay's language, of the cheirotheria order of mammals, or in other words as the highest class of the monkey species. The authorship of the book was for some time doubtful, and many possible authors were suggested—the Prince Consort being among the number,—but at last there seemed no question that Robert Chambers was the culprit, though he never explicitly acknowledged it. As we have already seen, the book cost him the Lord Provostship, to which he would certainly have been elected but for the prejudice created thereby.

The *Vestiges of Creation* went beyond the sphere of simple geology and attempted to show the physiological progress as well. But in this latter field a much bolder speculator was shortly to arise, whose theories produced a far greater revolution in established opinion than was ever achieved by Chambers. The greatest man of

science of his day—we might perhaps say of any day,—Charles Robert Darwin, was born at Shrewsbury in 1809, and educated at Shrewsbury School, Edinburgh University, and Christ's College, Cambridge. He was originally intended to be a physician, as his father and grandfather, Erasmus Darwin, the once famous author of the *Botanic Garden*, had been before him, and was for that reason sent to Edinburgh, but the study of medicine was repulsive to him, and he gave it up for the Church. For his new profession he required an English degree and was therefore sent to Cambridge, but he did not advance much more there than he had done at Edinburgh. Zoology and botany had more attraction for him than any of the regular routine work. From a very early period of his life he was a keen sportsman, and his love of shooting had given him, as it usually did under the old *régime*, a strong inclination towards the study of natural history. So he shot and hunted, and played cards and collected prints, and enjoyed himself greatly at Cambridge, but, except for the collecting of beetles and other strange and unseemly wild beasts, his heart was not in his work. Euclid, it is true, was not without charms, and Paley was studied with confidence and respect, but what were these to Humboldt's *Travels*?

It is easy to imagine the effect upon a young man of an adventurous nature and with such

a bent of mind, of the offer of a berth on board H.M.S. "Beagle," just about to be despatched on a scientific expedition to South America under Captain, afterwards Admiral, Fitzroy. Delighted as he was by this prospect, Darwin gave way to his father's objections and refused the post, but fortunately the interposition of his uncle, Josiah Wedgwood, the potter, and other friends smoothed away all difficulties, and he was allowed to recall his refusal. He sailed in the end of the year 1831, and was absent five years; how he employed his time during that period will be found in the delightful pages of his *Narrative*. Though a work of extreme learning, it is certainly one that may be confidently recommended to the most unlearned reader; the ease of the narrative and the pictorial grace of the descriptions can be recognised by all, and the more recondite passages, bristling as they do with terms totally unintelligible to the unscientific, will no more break the interest for them than a school-boy's ignorance of the operation of club-hauling would interfere with his enjoyment of the storm in *Peter Simple*. This may perhaps be regarded as a low view to take of a valuable work of science, but we have already admitted our incapacity to gauge any but the literary merits of the book with which we have to deal.

Darwin's post on board the "Beagle" had been

unpaid, but on his return he received a State grant of one thousand pounds to enable him to produce a complete account of his discoveries and observations. In addition to the *Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of H.M.S.S. "Adventure" and "Beagle,"* he edited the *Zoology of the Voyage*, containing contributions by Professor Owen and other learned writers, based upon the collections brought back by Darwin, and subsequently published a series of treatises on the geological results arrived at during the cruise. Among these last was the valuable work on the *Structure of Coral Reefs*, which appeared in 1842. Darwin had now distinctly taken up the career of science as the one business of his life. He married in 1839 his cousin, Emma Wedgwood, and settled at the village of Down near Sevenoaks, where he devoted himself entirely to scientific researches in spite of the weakness of his health, which had already shown itself. It is supposed that the excessive sea-sickness from which he suffered during the early part of his voyage on board the "Beagle" had undermined his constitution, and he practically never recovered. His work, however, went on with unabated energy, and he soon began to turn his attention to the great question of the origin and development of species, which is his principal title to fame. To give his own account of the manner in which he took up this work :—

When on board H.M.S. "Beagle" as naturalist (he says in his introduction) I was much struck with certain facts in the distribution of the inhabitants of South America and in the geological relations of the present to the past inhabitants of that continent. These facts seemed to me to throw some light on the origin of species—that mystery of mysteries, as it has been called by one of our greatest philosophers. On my return home it occurred to me in 1837 that something might perhaps be made out of this question by patiently accumulating and reflecting on all sorts of facts which could possibly have any bearing on it. After five years' work I allowed myself to speculate on the subject and drew up some short notes ; these I enlarged in 1844 into a sketch of the conclusions which then seemed to me probable : from that period to the present day I have steadily pursued the same object.

These details he gave to show that he had not been "hasty in coming to a decision." He had, in fact, been at work for twenty-two years, and even at the end of this time he was obliged to publish the results of his researches earlier than he had meant to do. In a note-book, which he used in 1837, there is already found a speculation that "the permanent variations produced by confined breeding and changing circumstances are continued and produced according to the adaptations of such circumstances, and therefore that the death of a species is a consequence of non-adaptation of circumstances." This passage may be said to contain the root of his theory. To verify or disprove it he spent his probationary years in

experiments only. He observed most carefully the variations of domesticated species, such as have been adapted to the use of man, choosing as one special and strongly-marked instance the widely differing breeds of pigeons which man has trained by deliberate selection into all kinds of fantastic developments, all of which, however, Darwin succeeded in tracing back to a common origin in something very closely resembling the ordinary wild rock-pigeon of to-day. Having established the connection between wild and tame species, he studied next the variations of the former, and traced by degrees, as every one knows, how these have served at once to develop and strengthen the forms of life by the growth and continuance of the stronger creatures and the extinction of the weaker. "Multiply, vary, let the strongest live and the weakest die," was the one general law leading to the advancement of all organic beings. For the world would not hold the numbers of one species only if all its members had an equal chance to survive and multiply; only those who are strongest and most fitted to live can produce fresh generations of yet stronger creatures, of whom, in their turn, only those continue who are better adapted to the ever-changing conditions of their existence. But it is, of course, unnecessary to rehearse the well-known doctrines put forward by Darwin; "natural selection" and the "struggle

for existence " are now household words among us, though they seemed marvellous indeed in the eyes of the world when they were first produced.

The establishment of these variations led the inquirer back to the parent stock or stocks from which they originally deviated till he reached the point of believing that "animals have descended from at most only four or five progenitors, and plants from an equal or lesser number." Whether this number could be narrowed down to one he could not decide, but was led to infer from analogy that probably "all the organic beings which have ever lived on this earth have descended from one primordial form, into which life was first breathed by the Creator."

An ultra-conscientious worker, like Darwin, is often reluctant to bring his experiments to a close and build his theory on the results ; it always seems to him that he has not proof enough, that a little further work may bring him to so much more definite a point, or—perhaps the most frequent feeling of all—that he has not tested his theory quite sufficiently, even when every conceivable objection to it has been exhausted. It was not till 1856 that he was persuaded by the urgent remonstrances of his scientific friends to write down his results ; he consented, but reluctantly, and the work moved on very slowly till two years later an unforeseen incident impelled him to hurry forward

the composition and publication with all speed. In 1858 Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace sent Darwin from the Malay Islands, where he was pursuing his researches in natural history, a paper of his own containing the exposition of a theory almost exactly similar to that which Darwin had already formed. Mr. Wallace said nothing about the publication of his paper, only asking that it might be sent on to Lyell; but Darwin thought it ought to be given to the world, while at the same time reluctant to put forward the theory to which he really had a prior claim as the discovery of another man. To keep back Wallace's article and bring out his own book would, on the other hand, be, as he conceived, dishonourable. In this condition of doubt he put the matter into the hands of Sir Charles Lyell and Dr.—afterwards Sir Joseph—Hooker, who decided that Mr. Wallace's paper should be published together with a letter addressed by Darwin to Dr. Asa Gray in 1857 containing an account of his theory and of the memorandum he had drawn up in 1844. These two documents appeared together in the *Journal* of the Linnean Society in July 1858.

This matter once off his hands, Darwin hastened to get out his work on the *Origin of Species*. Owing to the necessity of prompt publication it was not nearly so large as he had intended it to be. This circumstance, which the

author deplored, was probably one reason of its success, as the public felt more able to master a short work of this kind, which, however, does not in reality show any of the ill effects of condensation. Darwin himself had the most gloomy anticipations on the subject; he considered the style to be "incredibly bad" and "most difficult to make clear or smooth." In this, like many a writer before and since his time, he judged wrong. It is true that we have no longer here the light and picturesque style of the *Voyage of the "Beagle"*; there is here an occasion for solid reasoning which does not allow of the easy grace of the *Narrative*. But the style is clear and dignified, and though the argument is always followed steadily out, there is no tendency to hurry over the illustrations of which the book is full and which serve to bring the consecutive steps of the argument vividly before even the unlearned reader. The account of the slave-making ants, for instance, though not a word is lost upon it that could be spared, is as picturesque and spirited as anything that the author ever wrote. The success of the *Origin of Species* was phenomenal for a work of this description; the first edition of twelve hundred and fifty copies was bought up as soon as it appeared, and a second issue of more than double the size had to be brought out as soon as it could be got ready. The *Edinburgh Review* and other periodicals

reviewed it unfavourably, but the public read it with immense interest and the world of science regarded it as a new gospel.

The writer, however, was far from being satisfied to leave his work there, and began immediately to get in order his materials for an enlarged view of the theories he had been obliged to put together with haste and brevity. Eight years were employed in perfecting his work upon the first object of his study, the *Variation of Plants under Domestication*, which appeared in 1868. So far he had hardly touched the question of the origin of the human species, though he did not conceal his opinion that it must be treated in the same manner as the others, but this last elaborate work brought vividly before him the necessity of dealing with the most absolutely domesticated of all animals, man. In 1871 appeared the *Descent of Man*, a work which created almost as great a sensation as the *Origin of Species* itself, though the hubbub of disapprobation subsided sooner. No doubt, it was not flattering to human vanity to find its ancestors traced back through many generations of apes to the original ascidian,—to a period when, as Lord Neaves sings,

Man was once a leather bottel—

but the world was soon persuaded that it was a matter of no great importance to it. The *Descent of Man* was succeeded by another work, also

tending to emphasise the connection of man with the rest of animated nature, entitled the *Expression of the Emotions in Man and other Animals*, to all of which he assigned a "gradual and natural origin." This may be considered as the last of Darwin's great books, though he did not slacken his work in spite of continual ill-health up to his death in 1882. We must also mention, however, his delightful works on *Orchids* and other botanical subjects, and his valuable treatise on the *Formation of Vegetable Mould through the Action of Worms, with Observations on their Habits*, published the year before his death. The worms were old friends of his, to whom he had paid much attention in early life, and it would have been unfair to neglect their claims. Darwin had in early life been a very ardent student of the best English literature, but strangely enough he seems to have altogether lost his love of Shakespeare even in his later days. The taste for music, which had made him a constant frequenter of King's College Chapel when at Cambridge, he retained up to his death, as also his predilection for novels, in the selection of which he was not very particular, as long as they ended happily. His favourite doctrines of heredity have found some countenance in the scientific achievements of his sons, one of whom is a Professor of Astronomy at Cambridge and another a distinguished botanist.

Of less note than the great man of whom we have been speaking, but of much renown in the same department of science, was William Benjamin Carpenter. Born in 1813 and educated with great care at the school conducted by his father, Lant Carpenter, a distinguished Unitarian preacher, Carpenter, like Darwin, was destined by his family for the medical profession. During his early training in that science, he followed his instructor, the physician who had attended his family, to the West Indies, where he saw much of the under side of the great measure of abolition with the paint off, and returned home with a wholesome distrust of sweeping reforms unless introduced with the utmost caution. He studied medicine first in London and then in Edinburgh, where he began to devote himself to the study of physiology, contributing many papers on that subject to the Edinburgh scientific journals, which attracted general attention even beyond the limits of the United Kingdom. In 1839 appeared his best-known book on the *Principles of General and Comparative Physiology*, a work of great value, supplying a place in English scientific literature which had remained blank up to that time. Among Carpenter's other works were his very useful *Popular Cyclopædia of Science* (1843) and his *Principles of Mental Physiology* (1874). The immense number of treatises which his wide sphere

of knowledge and his unflagging energy gave to the *Transactions* of learned societies and to scientific periodicals, do not come within our province. Carpenter only accepted the Darwinian theory with reservations, considering that the work of the Creator was not sufficiently set forward. He was, like his father, a strict Unitarian. Carpenter died in 1885 from injuries received through the upsetting of a spirit-lamp. Two of his sons have achieved distinction in science, Drs. Lant and Herbert Carpenter, neither of whom, unhappily, is still among us.

Another man of genius whose special department of science was physiology and whose career was prematurely cut short was Francis Maitland Balfour (1851-82), a brother of the distinguished leader of the House of Commons in the late Parliament. Rarely, indeed, have such great anticipations been formed of a young man, as seemed to be justified by the equal boldness and accuracy of young Balfour's investigations. Darwin himself, it was confidently predicted, would barely hold his own before this wonderful young *savant*, whose youthful daring in hypothesis and experiment was equalled by the profound insight and severe accuracy which are naturally attributed to a maturer age. Some part of the lofty expectations conceived by those who watched his career were realised during his brief lifetime, but the melancholy accident on

the Aiguille Blanche de Péteret cut short in its thirty-first year the life that was so full of hope and promise. His great *Treatise on Comparative Embryology* can certainly not be called literature, though its value as a scientific work is undisputed.

Among living writers who have dealt with similar subjects none has perhaps been more successful than Professor Huxley. Thomas Henry Huxley was born at Ealing in 1825, studied medicine in his youth and served for some years as a naval surgeon. His lectures upon the "Relation of Man to the Lower Animals," delivered in 1862 to an audience of working men, earned him a *succès de scandale*, which was perhaps only commensurate to their merits. His views of the controversy which arose therefrom are embodied in his *Evidence as to Man's Place in Nature*, published in 1863. In 1870 appeared his *Lay Sermons, Addresses, and Reviews*, one of his most generally successful works. Professor Huxley had at this time just been elected to the School Board and was taking his stand as the uncompromising adversary of denominational teaching. His fame, however, undoubtedly rests upon his remarkable investigations in comparative anatomy and biology. As a Biblical critic he is also not unknown. Some years ago there was a picture in *Punch*—we think by Charles Keene—

of a country farmer, gazing in bewilderment at Mr. Briton Rivière's picture of the swine who ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and inquiring of his parson whom he happened to have met, "Who paid for they pigs?" Professor Huxley has devoted himself to the solution of this important question with an ardour worthy of a larger subject. Another explorer in the same field, whom we have had occasion to mention already, is Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace, author of *Travels on the Amazon and the Rio Negro* (1852), *Malay Archipelago* (1869), *Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection* (1870), *Tropical Nature* (1878), etc. He is also the author of some works on subjects connected with spiritualism. A far greater name is that of Sir Richard Owen, the first of comparative anatomists and palæontologists. But much as we should wish to give to one so universally esteemed his meed of praise, we can hardly consider his works as coming within the sphere of literature. We may mention among his principal books the *History of British Fossil Mammals and Birds* (1846), the *Palæontology* (1860), and the *Fossil Mammals of Australia* (1877), as a few among many works of especial value to scientific inquiry; but such books as these do not come within our ken. All the world has long agreed to love and honour their author,

and we would heartily support them if it came within the scope of our work to do so.

There is no more fascinating branch of natural history than that which deals with flowers and plants. But it must be admitted that botanical works employ a jargon too strange for the common understanding, and are rarely of any special literary merit. Among the few writers of this class who at all require our attention, we may take special notice of the two Hookers, father and son. Sir William Jackson Hooker (1785-1865), Curator of the Royal Gardens at Kew, was well known as the author of the *British Flora* and other works on similar subjects. His son, Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker, K.C.S.I., born in 1817, took up the medical profession in his youth and went out with Sir James Ross's expedition to the Antarctic regions in 1839 in the capacity of assistant-surgeon. His services, however, were really required as a naturalist, and he published after his return a voluminous and important work on the subject entitled the *Botany of the Antarctic Voyage* (1847-60). A tour to India, which he undertook some years later, bore its fruit in the interesting *Himalayan Journals* published in 1854, as well as in other more purely scientific works. In later years came the *Journal of a Tour in Morocco*, written in collaboration with Mr. John Ball, in which again, as in the more striking

Himalayan experiences, the profundity of Sir Joseph Hooker's discoveries is lightened by a pleasant dash of adventure.

If we may venture to do so in such august company, we should like before taking our leave of natural history to say a few words of those who have written on these subjects such mere gospels for the Gentiles as are meant to be merely understood of the people. Since Gilbert White wrote of his beloved Selborne, there has perhaps hardly been a more delightful writer on natural history than Richard Jefferies (1848-87), author of the *Gamekeeper at Home*, and of other charming works, such as have made the town-bred boy bewail the fortune that did not cast his lines among those pleasant places, and the careless country lad curse the negligence which has made him overlook the beautiful things that others can find everywhere to see. We should like also to register a debt of gratitude to the late Rev. John George Wood (1827-89), whose fascinating records of phenomena common and uncommon, of strange customs of outlandish nations and other stranger ways of nature that are constantly going on under our noses, occupy a special place of their own in literature, and that not in the lowest rank.

The science of astronomy tells us of almost greater wonders, or, at least, of wonders the magnitude of which can be more appreciated

than any of those we have mentioned. To the ignorant a popular explanation of these marvels has always a particular interest which hardly needs the aid of good writing to increase it, but the profound works which contribute to the advancement of the science are usually too abstruse for the ordinary reader. As we write these lines the news is brought to us of the death of one of the most distinguished Englishmen who followed this science, Sir George Biddell Airy (1801-92), who held for nearly fifty years the post of Astronomer-Royal. His work in many branches of science was highly valuable, but it would be hardly possible to treat his scientific labours from the point of view of literature. We may, however, mention among his best-known works the treatises on *Errors of Observation*, on *Sound*, and on *Magnetism*. Sir George was one of the last survivors of the great band of *savants* who shed lustre upon the earlier years of the present reign; Sir Joseph Hooker is perhaps now the only one. A younger writer, but one now numbered for many years among the workers of the past, was John Pringle Nichol (1804-59), one of the earliest upholders of the "nebular hypothesis" of the origin of all our universe. Nichol's views were laid before the public in 1837 in his *Views of the Architecture of the Heavens*, a work of considerable literary merit, clear and easy in style,

though with something of a pedagogic didacticness which it is sometimes difficult to avoid in works of this class. Professor Nichol, who occupied the Chair of Astronomy at the University of Glasgow, also published a work on the *Solar System* and a *Cyclopædia of Physical Science*. His theories were in great measure founded on the observations of Sir John Herschel (1792-1871),—son of the great Sir William Herschel,—who himself was the author of many learned treatises and a useful manual published in 1850 under the title of *Outlines of Astronomy*. Among living writers of eminence on this subject we should mention Mr. Norman Lockyer and Sir Robert Stawell Ball, whose *Story of the Heavens*, published in 1885, and other works written in an eminently readable style, entitle their author to a high place in literature. Sir Robert Ball is also known as the author of the valuable *London Science Class-Books on Astronomy and Mechanics*.

There are many branches of science into which it would be absurd for us to penetrate with our present object. Chemistry, for instance, brings before us the illustrious name of Michael Faraday, but Faraday, though one of the most charming of lecturers, wrote little, and was, in the little that he did write, too technical for our purpose. Nor would it be possible for us to venture into the immense field of medical literature. Of living

men of science, of whom we have already mentioned some, we have little to say. Yet a word may be given to Sir John Lubbock, as a man of a marked personality, whose scientific achievements are well known, and whose agreeable manner of writing has brought him perhaps more disciples than some profounder sages have found. Among his more valuable works we may mention *Pre-historic Times, as illustrated by Ancient Remains and the Manners and Customs of Modern Savages*, first published in 1865, the *Origin of Civilisation and the Primitive Condition of Man* (1870), and the *Pleasures of Life*, a collection of slight essays upon miscellaneous subjects which perhaps received more praise than was due to its intrinsic merits. A greater name in the world of science, though hardly better known to the world at large, is that of Professor John Tyndall, whose rank in the world of chemistry and whose researches, especially in the regions of light and heat, are too well known for us to insist upon. The unlearned remember with gratitude the pleasure and instruction they derived from his *Fragments of Science*, of which a fresh series has just been given to the world. Professor Tyndall's inquiries into the phenomena of glaciers have also given us some delightful reading concerning his own experiences in the mountain expeditions which he undertook, originally at least, for this purpose. It is not

easy to write heavily of Alpine exploits, yet few of such books are of as much interest as will be found in Professor Tyndall's *Glaciers of the Alps*, *Mountaineering*, and especially in the *Hours of Exercise in the Alps*.

CHAPTER III

OF SOME PHILOSOPHICAL WRITERS

IF we were nervous of dealing with the question of science, we find even more difficulty in approaching the sphere of the metaphysical and psychological writers who have contributed their speculations to the history of thought in the reign of Queen Victoria. This is also to a great extent out of the sphere of literature, and we certainly cannot be expected to trace elaborately the course and variations of the different schools of thought. The most we can do is to give a simple chronicle of what the greatest writers in this department have done, and to calculate broadly their influence on the world of speculation. At the same time we must now as in many other cases declare, with all suitable apologies, that we cannot pretend to offer the reader an exhaustive catalogue of living writers on this subject. *Nomen illis legio*; there is too numerous a band of workers in this

important sphere for us to follow them out into every sub-category of what is after all a technical branch of literature. We shall therefore only include the names of a few living writers who may be regarded as representative men, and if we err in our selection, we beg those contributors to philosophical literature whom we may have omitted to make allowances for the difficulties of our task. Again, we cannot of course speak so largely of the living as of the dead. Mill's famous examination of Sir William Hamilton's philosophy was prefaced by an expression of regret that there was now no possibility of his attack eliciting one of those swashing blows for which the great Scottish philosopher had a not unmerited reputation, and this we at once recognise as the feeling natural to every manly controversialist ; but the position of the chronicler who has to review all that has been done even in the history of one man's thought has other difficulties and other duties. There is in a book, we think, of Mr. Thomas Hughes, a lover who, in answer to his future father-in-law's objection to his political opinions, pleads that these have changed once already during his life, and that as he is still a young man, it is quite possible that they may change again. This possibility is of wide application. Even if we leave out all question of possible conversion from one view to another, there is with every real thinker

a constant process of maturing going on, which may lead to the most startling results. Would it have been fair, for instance, for a writer of the time to have reviewed Ferrier's system on the ground supplied by his first remarkable article on the *Philosophy of Consciousness*?

Perhaps the most remarkable figure in the philosophical world at the commencement of the Victorian era was that of Sir William Hamilton, the second founder of the Scotch common-sense school. William Stirling Hamilton was born at Glasgow in 1788, of a good Lothian family, which, however, was hardly then in its best days. His great-uncle and his grandfather had been successively Professors of Anatomy at Glasgow University, where young William Hamilton himself received his first education after leaving the grammar school of that city. From Glasgow he went to Balliol, through the medium of one of those Snell exhibitions, of which Lockhart also held one at the time when his friend, Hamilton, went up to Oxford. Hamilton was at this time known as much for his love of study and the extraordinary range of his reading as for his equally great athletic powers; when he went up for his final honour schools, the list of books which he offered to be examined in was so extensive and remarkable that the examiner—the well-known scholar, Thomas Gaisford—preserved a copy of

it. On leaving the University he at first took up the study of medicine, but subsequently relinquished it for the Bar, to which he was called in 1815 ; his only success as an advocate appears to have been when arguing in his own cause for the baronetcy of Hamilton of Preston, which was subsequently adjudged to him. He had a great reputation for erudition, especially in antiquarian subjects, and for knowledge of the systems of philosophy ; and was one of the little society in which the wild squibs of the early numbers of *Blackwood* were composed, though he hardly seems to have contributed anything himself, beyond one verse of the "Chaldee Manuscript." In 1820 he was an unsuccessful candidate for the vacant Chair of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh, to which Wilson was elected, as was well known, on purely political grounds. Had this not been acknowledged, it would have appeared, what it certainly was, a gross injustice to Hamilton, who, however, neither made any break in his friendship with Wilson nor bore malice against any of those who had brought about his defeat. He was more successful in obtaining the professorship of Civil History in the next year, which, however, he was required to share with William Fraser Tytler, the previous holder ; and was afterwards appointed Solicitor of the Teinds, a legal office with little work and less pay. In 1836 he obtained the

post in which he made his principal mark, that of Professor of Logic and Metaphysics in Edinburgh University.

Meanwhile he had begun to come before the world as a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, his first production being an attack on Cousin's theory of the knowledge of the Absolute. In this article was first brought forward his own distinctive theory that all our knowledge is relative ; a knowledge of things in themselves apart from phenomena, was to him an impossibility. We venture to quote as a specimen of his style the striking image by which this great proposition was illustrated.

The universe (he said) may be conceived as a polygon of a thousand, or a hundred thousand sides or facets, and each of these sides or facets may be conceived as representing one special mode of existence. Now, of these thousand sides or modes, all may be equally essential, but three or four only may be turned towards us or be analogous to our organs. One side or facet of the Universe, as holding a relation to the organ of sight, is the mode of luminous or visible existence ; another as proportional to the organ of hearing, is the mode of sonorous or audible existence ; and so on.

The discourse is somewhat too heavily shotted for the ordinary reader, but the vivid simile shows a decided proportion of literary power. Jeffrey, however, declared the article unreadable, and scolded his successor, Napier, vehemently for publishing it ; Cousin, on the other hand, against

whom it was directed, gave a generous praise to the essay. Hamilton, after this, continued to write for the *Edinburgh* for some years, on various subjects. Among his most successful articles were the "Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum," dealing with the early period of the Reformation, and many articles directed against the English Universities, Oxford in particular.

It was, however, by his lectures on psychology, metaphysics, and logic that Hamilton won his immense reputation, as it is by the published form of these that he comes into our province. They probably lose somewhat by appearing in print; old pupils who had heard him, gave such wonderful accounts of his striking and impressive delivery, heightened as it was by the aspect of his noble presence and the singular beauty of his face, especially when lighted up by the enthusiasm of teaching. In print the lectures are not lively reading, and the style is apt to be heavy and occasionally pedantic. They were published after his death by two of his disciples, of whom we shall have to speak later, Professor (afterwards Dean) Mansel and Professor Veitch. Into a full discussion of the views put forth therein it is not our part to go deeply. Hamilton called himself a natural realist, believing in the existence of an actual world outside our own ideas of it, and of which we have immediate knowledge, or as he

would say, perception, though he admitted that we attach to real, essential matter certain secondary qualities which proceed from our own impressions, such as colour, taste, and the rest. Of such primary qualities as size, figure, number, mobility or immobility we have, however, a real perception. Of the Absolute or Infinite he maintained that we could have no knowledge, all human knowledge being relative and limited to the phenomenal. "As the greyhound cannot outstrip his shadow, nor the eagle outsoar the atmosphere in which he floats and by which alone he may be supported, so the mind cannot transcend that sphere of limitation within and through which exclusively the possibility of thought is realised." But when he said the Infinite could not be known, Hamilton was far from denying that it could be believed. The faith to which he ascribed a much more extensive sphere than that of knowledge supplied the place left vacant by the latter. Belief he regarded as "the original warrant of cognition."

Reason itself must rest at last upon authority; for the original data of reason do not rest on reason, but are necessarily accepted by reason on the authority of what is beyond itself. These data are therefore in rigid propriety, beliefs or trusts. Thus it is that in the last resort we must, perforce, philosophically admit that belief is the primary condition of reason, and not reason the ultimate ground of belief. We are compelled to surrender the proud

Intellige ut credas of Abelard, to content ourselves with the humble *Crede ut intelligas* of Anselm.

Mr. Masson has pointed out that Hamilton might have gone back to an earlier and greater teacher even than St. Anselm, who said that "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. . . . Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."

It is hardly necessary to say that Hamilton held the intuitionist doctrines of the stout old Scotch common-sense school, whose argument was stated by him in the terse form that "what is by nature necessarily believed to be, truly is." In logic he was a constant champion of the importance of the deductive method. Among his best known works, besides the *Lectures* and *Discussions*, is his valuable edition of works of his great predecessor, Reid. He also commenced an edition of Dugald Stewart's works, but did not live to carry it out. He died in 1856. Such of his edition of Reid as had been left unfinished was carefully carried to a conclusion by two of his principal followers, Professors Mansel and Veitch.

Henry Longueville Mansel (1820-71) was rather a man of possibilities than of execution. In the wide range of his reading he cannot have

fallen far short of his master, Hamilton. He was also a keen and able reasoner, and the weight of his learning was relieved by flashes of a wit of the good old scholastic class. His works, however, have hardly been as successful as they perhaps deserved to be. As Bampton Lecturer in 1858, he startled his congregations and the outside world by his speculations on the *Limits of Religious Thought*, demonstrating in stronger language than Hamilton would ever have used that it is utterly impossible for man to form any positive conception of the attributes of God. He also differed from Hamilton in his view of the possibility of an immediate knowledge not only of the act of consciousness, but also of the conscious subject itself, which to the elder thinker was only known or knowable through its phenomena or qualities. Perhaps Mansel's greatest work was his *Philosophy of the Conditioned*, published in 1866 in answer to John Stuart Mill's *Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*. He held in succession several professorships at Oxford, was for some years a Canon of Christ Church, and from 1869 to his death in 1871 Dean of St. Paul's. Another distinguished follower of Hamilton who also differs from him in some important points fortunately still lives, Dr. James M'Cosh, President of the New Jersey College at Princeton, U.S.A. Born in Ayrshire in 1811, Dr. M'Cosh was

educated at Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities, and becoming a minister of the Church of Scotland in 1835, took a leading part some years later in the famous schism, and was one of the chief organisers of the new Free Church. In 1851 he was appointed Professor of Logic and Metaphysics at Queen's College, Belfast, which chair he retained till his election to his present post in 1868. One of his most important works is the important and valuable review of the *Scottish Philosophy, Biographical, Expository and Critical*, published in 1874. He is also the author of the *Method of Divine Government, Physical and Moral*, the *Intuitions of the Mind inductively investigated*, an *Examination of Mr. J. S. Mill's Philosophy, Christianity and Positivism*, and many other works. The doctrine of the relativity of knowledge is one of the chief points on which Dr. M'Cosh differs from Hamilton, he recurring to what he considers the purer natural realism of Reid.

Among other prominent Hamiltonians we may mention the names of Alexander Campbell Fraser, successor of that great master in the Chair of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh, author of *Essays in Philosophy, Rational Philosophy*, etc., and editor of an excellent edition of the *Works of Bishop Berkeley, with Dissertations and Annotations*; of the late Thomas Spencer

Baynes (1823-87), Professor of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews,—perhaps most widely known as the editor of the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*,—and of John Veitch, Professor of Logic and Rhetoric at Glasgow, the biographer of Hamilton, and, with Mansel, editor of his lectures. He also completed the memoir of Dugald Stewart in part prepared by Hamilton for his edition of Stewart's works. Professor Veitch, who is an able and exceedingly combative writer in his natural sphere of metaphysics, has not confined his attention solely to that branch of knowledge, as his *History and Poetry of the Scottish Border* bears witness. Among the best known of his philosophical works are his *Lucretius and the Atomic Theory*, *Institutes of Logic*, and *Knowing and Being*.

Among the English adherents of the intuitional school we find at the beginning of the reign one very marked figure, whose individuality was perhaps more striking than his works have been effective. William Whewell, born at Lancaster in 1794, of obscure extraction, was emphatically the son of his own good works. By dint of sheer ability and force of character he fought his way up to the very highest place in the University of Cambridge,—certainly a much more democratic institution than that of Oxford,—becoming in succession Fellow and Tutor of his College,

Professor of Mineralogy, Professor of Moral Philosophy, and Master of Trinity. In this last capacity Whewell was emphatically king, or rather pope of Cambridge. The authority that he exercised was of the manner of a paternal despotism, the chief thing postulated from his subjects being that they should agree with him. To strangers,—especially unargumentative strangers,—and to dutiful subjects, no potentate could be more gracious, but the rebellious spirits who set up theories of their own were apt to be somewhat roughly treated. Whewell was conscious of the enormous extent of his knowledge and perhaps too anxious to prove that nothing was omitted from it; as was wittily said of him, "Science was his forte and omniscience his foible." The chief philosophical work which he gave to the literature of this reign was his valuable *Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences*, published in 1840. He remained throughout life one of the most fearless and able champions of the *à priori* element in knowledge as opposed to Mill and the empiricists, who were practically sweeping the board in England at this period. Among his other works were the *History of Scientific Ideas*, *Philosophy of Discovery*, etc. He died from the effects of a fall from his horse in 1866.

A more striking figure and of greater importance in the world of metaphysics was the

brilliant Scotch thinker and writer who had perhaps the most thoroughly literary genius of all those of whom we have to speak in this chapter. To this literary genius, indeed, James Frederick Ferrier had some hereditary right, being the nephew on one side of Miss Ferrier, the novelist, and on the other of Professor Wilson, whose daughter he married. Born in 1808 and educated at Edinburgh University and at Magdalen, Oxford, he returned to Edinburgh after taking his degree in 1831 and formed a friendship there with Sir William Hamilton at whose feet he sat, figuratively speaking, and from whom he received much encouragement in his natural turn for metaphysical inquiry. He had been called to the Scottish Bar, but he cared little for legal studies and made no attempt to succeed in his profession. Urged by the love of speculation, he determined to proceed to Heidelberg to make a more careful study of the doctrines of German philosophy, and Hamilton apparently encouraged him to do so. Human wisdom is certainly relative ; with a more extended knowledge of the possibilities, would the sage have consented to transfer this promising young plant from the secure hothouse of the old Scotch realism to the dangerous soil of Germany ? At least it must have been patent to Hamilton that it was impossible to have any absolute knowledge of Ferrier in himself, when he saw the

latter return from Germany a red-hot idealist, a lover of Hegel, a supporter of Schelling's doctrine of Absolute Identity !

Some natural tears he shed but dried them soon :

at least no interruption of the friendship between Hamilton and Ferrier occurred till the death of the former. But Ferrier was lost as a disciple, nor was there any hope of bringing back the stray sheep into the fold of natural realism. It is true that he turned out on closer examination to be not exactly a follower of Hegel or Schelling, but emphatically a Ferrierian who fought for his own hand like Henry Gow. The first published exposition of his views, though still in a very immature form, was an article on the *Philosophy of Consciousness*, published in 1838 in *Blackwood's Magazine*. In this he, however, chiefly confines himself to the common doctrines of the *à priori* school, laying great stress on consciousness as opposed to states of mind, and discouraging the application of the method of physical research to psychological problems, "for the psychologist must first act or create the great phenomenon which he has to observe." In 1845 he received the appointment he held till his death, in 1864, of Professor of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews. His greatest work, the *Institutes of Metaphysic: the Theory of Knowing and Being*, was published in 1854.

In this valuable and interesting work, Ferrier definitely cut himself adrift from the doctrines of Sir William Hamilton, and cast in his lot, with some reservations, with the German successors of Kant and especially with Schelling and Hegel. The principal foundation of his argument is the theorem that "along with whatever any intelligence knows, it must, as the ground or condition of its knowledge, have some cognisance of itself." From this he argued that the only independent universe of which any mind can think is a universe in synthesis with some other mind or ego. His argument is pursued through the various frames of Epistemology, or the science of knowledge; Agnoiology, or the science of ignorance; and Ontology, or the science of being. The system adopted of a series of deductions, akin to the methods of geometrical reasoning, is at first sight not an attractive one; but a compensation for this is found in the clear, distinct and attractive style of writing and the singular fertility and power of illustration. The final conclusion arrived at is that the "only true real and independent existences are minds-together-with-that-which-they-apprehend,"—"that there is one, but only one, absolute existence which is strictly necessary; and that existence is a supreme and infinite and everlasting Mind in synthesis with all things."

Ferrier has perhaps never had any disciples,

but his book is still remembered with respect and instanced as a remarkable example of excellence in that department of speculative thought which for some time appeared to have lost entirely its attraction for at least the English school of thinkers. His *Lectures on Greek Philosophy*, published after his death, which occurred in 1864, by his son-in-law, Sir Alexander Grant—known by his valuable edition of the *Ethics* of Aristotle—and Professor Lushington, had perhaps a more general popularity. Ferrier left behind him the memory of a man who had deliberately chosen the calm sphere of contemplation as that in which he could do most good ; he was far from being without interest in outside matters, was a vehement politician of a curiously analytical Tory type, and took profound interest in many questions of the day, but his heart was in nothing so much as in that pure metaphysical research, which to John Stuart Mill and his generation appeared merely a study of the useless.

Thought will certainly never be dead ; but for a period it seemed not unlikely that the sphere of pure speculation would be deserted as comparatively futile. One of the first to show the fallacy of this view by a powerful and profound study of one of the most idealistic theories was Mr. James Hutchison Stirling, whose remarkable work on the *Secret of Hegel*, published a year after

Ferrier's death in 1865, was the commencement of an important reaction in this respect. Mr. Stirling had devoted many years to the study of the philosophy of Hume, Kant, and Hegel, whom he considered as the three most important and almost solely important teachers of philosophy. By his accurate knowledge and profound appreciation of Hegel's Logic, Mr. Stirling was perhaps the best qualified person to expound the views of that philosopher. We may, however, regret that he is as prone to contempt of what he disapproves as to enthusiasm for what he believes; for contempt is a distinctly unphilosophical attribute,—the wise man being contemptuous of nothing, save of evil,—and produces a kind of dogmatic, not to say, hectoring style, which is somewhat repulsive to all who are not naturally inclined to agree with the writer. Mr. Stirling is also the translator of Schwegler's valuable *Handbook of the History of Philosophy* and author of a *Text-Book to Kant*, an article on Sir William Hamilton's theory of Perception and other works. His Gifford lectures on "Philosophy and Theology," delivered in 1889-90, also attracted a good deal of attention.

An able follower of the same school who might have made a very great name for himself had he lived longer to carry out his projected work, was the late Thomas Hill Green (1836-82), Whyte Professor of Moral Philosophy at Oxford. Educated

at Rugby and Balliol, of which college he afterwards became Fellow and Tutor, Green was in early life doubtful what career to undertake, or to what literary studies to turn his mind. He commenced a translation of Baur's *History of the Christian Church*, and subsequently projected an edition of Aristotle's *Ethics*, but did not complete either task. His lectures on Aristotle and the early Greek philosophers, as well as on the English thinkers of the seventeenth century, excited much attention at Oxford. In 1874-75 appeared his celebrated edition,—in collaboration with Mr. T. H. Grose—of Hume's *Philosophical Works*, in the preliminary dissertation prefixed to which he criticised severely the doctrines of the school of empiricism. He held with Schelling and Hegel that the universe is a "single eternal activity or energy of which it is the essence to be self-conscious, that is, to be itself and not itself in one." The whole world of human experience was the "self-communication or revelation of eternal and absolute being." His work was unhappily interrupted by his early death at the age of forty-six. The *Prolegomena to Ethics* which he left unfinished at his death was issued at a later date under the editorship of his colleague at Balliol, Mr. Andrew Bradley. His activity was, however, by no means confined to this one sphere of work. "Tommy" Green, as he was called with affectionate disrespect

by the undergraduates, was not only a considerable power in the University, but also a man of importance in the affairs of the town, incessantly exerting himself to still the latent, ever-smouldering instinct of hostility against the authorities of the gown—and was an active member of the City Council. He was also a keen politician and an ardent worker in the cause of education. Among other notable followers of the new British Hegelian school may be mentioned Dr. John Caird, Principal of the University of Glasgow, and author of an *Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion* (1880) and other philosophical works, as well as some volumes of sermons; and his brother, Professor Edward Caird, author of various valuable works on the philosophy of Kant from a Hegelian point of view. Mr. Francis Herbert Bradley's brilliant *Ethical Studies* may also be mentioned in this connection.

Among the leaders of the opposition camp, the party who denied the existence of any ideal element in knowledge and held all thought to be derived from experience only, the most prominent is one of whom we have already spoken, John Stuart Mill. It only remains for us here to say something of the philosophical opinions expressed in his writings in view of their immense influence upon the thought of his day. We may first mention his famous *System of Logic*, published in

1843, a work of great value if only as putting forward in an admirably clear and forcible manner the view it advocates. As Mill believed only in the impressions obtained from experience, he was naturally unable to accept any of the necessary laws of thought, advocated by Hamilton and others. General laws were to him impossible, except perhaps as convenient assumptions adopted under protest against their ultimate truth ; there could never be a universal proposition, only a statement of probability, based on the absence of contradictory instances up to date, and the most apparently unquestionable generalisations might at any time be disproved by the discovery of an unforeseen case. The only process of value, therefore, was the inductive method of multiplying instances, and judging from their character what appeared to be a rule, incapable, however, of absolute assertion while there was any chance of contradiction remaining. Even to say, "All men are mortal" is not safe, for if the story of the Wandering Jew were proved to be true there would at once be doubt thrown upon it, though, of course, it would even then be impossible to show more than a case of unusually long life which might be terminated at any moment. As a work of learning, few books are more pleasant to read than Mill's *Logic*, or more convincing for the time to the reader. There is also a remarkable

wealth and appropriateness of illustration which is of great value to the literary eye ; every one knows the delightful simile—applied in derision of the deductive method—of the mountain which a man might ascend on his way from one place to another to get a clearer view of the surrounding country, though it would be quicker and easier to keep straight on along the flat, or that other image in the essay on *Utilitarianism* of the miser's gold, which, being solely valuable as a means to an end, is utterly useless to him.

Mill's empiricism, or experientialism as he preferred to call it, was of a somewhat peculiar kind. Perhaps he himself, who, though reared in the strictest sect of the Utilitarians, had an extraordinarily receptive and impressible mind, did not care often to go down to the relentless imperviousness of the foundations of his theory. The frank and open sensationalism of Condillac, for instance, filled him with repugnance and a kind of disgust, yet it is not easy, when we go to the bottom of his theory, to find anything particularly different in it. As an idealist he felt, though he almost seems to have been ashamed of it, a necessity for acknowledging the existence of something—as, indeed, most idealists do—though he stipulates that it is impossible to know anything about it. “As Body,” he tells us, “is the mysterious something which excites the mind to

feel, so Mind is the mysterious something which feels and thinks. . . . As Body is the unsentient cause to which we are naturally prompted to refer a certain portion of our feelings, so Mind may be described as the sentient subject (in the German sense of the term) of all feelings—that which has or feels them. But of the nature of either body or mind, further than the feelings which the former excites, and which the latter experiences, we do not, according to the best existing doctrine, know anything.”

When the *Positive Philosophy* of Auguste Comte appeared, Mill welcomed it heartily, as containing many things to which he gave unqualified approval. He did not like the word “positivist”; his own “experientialist” would have been better, or “phenomenalist,” as its great point was to emphasise the fact that all we can ever know anything about is simply the phenomenal. Still it was the real stuff, the genuine outcome, as he held, of the progress of philosophy through the course of ages. But he was excessively worried by Comte’s assertions that, when the positivist views were accepted all over the world—which is hardly likely to happen for a little while yet—no one would be so foolish as to retain any kind of belief in the absurdity of a Creator or Supreme Governor of the world. To this statement Mill distinctly objected; it was an

unnecessary manner of entering upon what had far better be left an open question, an uncalled-for burdening of the system with a "religious prejudice."

The positive mode of thought (he argued) is not necessarily a denial of the supernatural; it merely throws back that question to the origin of things. If the universe had a beginning, its beginning, by the very conditions of the case, was supernatural; the laws of nature cannot account for their own origin. The positive philosopher is free to form his opinion on this subject according to the weight he attaches to the analogies which are called marks of design, and to the general traditions of the human race.

Mill was also, as we have seen, the author of valuable treatises on *Political Economy*, on *Liberty*, and on *Utilitarianism*. But perhaps his most important contribution to philosophical literature is his *Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy, and of the Principal Philosophical Questions discussed in his Writings*. It is sheer polemic, of course, and polemic unhappily with a dead man, who had left, however, plenty of disciples to take up the cudgels for him. Nor can it be viewed as a tender or respectful treatment of an adversary who had stood so high among the thinkers of his time. This was indeed rather a cause of exasperation against Hamilton. "With all his learning," with all his abilities, what had Hamilton done to make the world one atom the richer or better? The fact that these great

faculties had all been spent in the fruitless and unprofitable sphere of metaphysics stirs all the gall of the Utilitarian. Even Sir William's immense erudition is in its way an offence ; why had he not devoted the time so idly spent to the service of mankind ? A more serious objection brought against Hamilton's metaphysical system was that his theories did not fit into each other. With his remarkable power of imagery, Mill likened Hamilton's conclusions to the tunnels which were being driven at the time of writing through the Mont Cenis from both ends simultaneously. It was confidently hoped that these would meet, but should they, by any unhappy chance, miss their point of meeting and go on blindly past each other, they would, in Mill's opinion, much resemble some of Hamilton's theories. Indeed, there are points in the Hamiltonian philosophy which certainly offer, at first sight, grave discrepancies to the student. How is, for instance, —the point which Mill seized upon—the doctrine of the relativity of knowledge to be reconciled with a theory of natural realism ? “ If what we perceive in the thing is something of which we are only aware as existing, and as causing impression on us, our knowledge of the thing is only relative. But if what we perceive and recognise is not merely a cause of our subjective impression, but a thing possessing, in its own nature and

essence, a long list of properties, Extension, Impenetrability, etc. . . . all perceived as 'essential attributes' of the thing as 'objectively existing,' all as 'Modes of a Not Self,' then I am willing to believe that in affirming this knowledge to be entirely relative to Self, such a thinker as Sir W. Hamilton had a meaning, but I have no small difficulty in discovering what it is." It is true that Hamilton had carefully anticipated this obvious objection by the distinction which he clearly states :—

I have frequently asserted that in perception we are conscious of the external object immediately and in itself. This is the doctrine of Natural Realism. But in saying that a thing is known in itself, I do not mean that this object is known to us in its absolute existence—that is, out of relation to us. To know a thing in itself or immediately is an expression I use merely in contrast to the knowledge of a thing in a representation or mediately.

We give Sir William's explanation for what it is worth ; undoubtedly Mill has put a rather awkward question. But it is no part of our duty to decide between them. Nor are there any of Mill's later works which need detain us. We may here perhaps turn to another very distinguished member of the same empirical or experiential school. Dr. Alexander Bain, Crown Professor of Logic at Aberdeen, was born in 1818 and is still fortunately among us. A great part

of his life has been spent in his native city of Aberdeen, where he has been student, teacher and professor, having been twice raised in the last twelve years to the exceptional honour of Lord Rector. As a philosopher he is chiefly known for his two great works on the phenomena of the mind, the *Senses and the Intellect*, published in 1855, and the *Emotions and the Will*, in 1856. In these works Professor Bain has dealt with the mind as if he was actually working at it with the scalpel, dissecting its states and tracing its processes. His method is avowedly formed on those of physiology, which it resembles. From his analysis it results that the resolution of the mind into nerve and brain does not exactly meet the necessities of the case. There is a force, he tells us, a mysterious power of originating impulses, which has nothing to do with sensation or impression. It is a singularly remarkable discovery from his point of view at least; whether it supports or disables the theories of his school we are not concerned to inquire. Professor Bain is also the author of *Mental and Moral Science, a Compendium of Psychology and Ethics, Logic, Deductive and Inductive, Mind and Body: Theories of their Relation, Education as a Science, John Stuart Mill, a Criticism with Personal Recollections*, and many other works.

A remarkable group of philosophers in our

age is supplied by those who have adopted the positive philosophy of Auguste Comte. This system sets aside all kinds of abstract speculation, denies the possibility of anything beyond the world known to science, or at best the possibility of knowing anything about it, and requires only an acquaintance with a certain category of sciences, Mathematics, Astronomy, General Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Sociology, the last being practically the goal to which all the others are tending,—the furthering of the cause of social progress, or, as an able writer of recent date has named it, the “Service of Man.” There is much that is to be admired in the aim of this little school, repulsive as its doctrines have proved to the majority of mankind. To those who believe that they have come out of nothing and are tending to nothing, who have nothing to be thankful for and nothing to hope, to these if to any one it might be excusable to say “Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die.” But to apprehend such a condition of affairs with nothing but ultimate ruin to look forward to, and yet to take as the aim of life the service of mankind, is surely the mark of a lofty purpose. It is only to be regretted that an exceedingly grotesque element should have been added in the absurd Religion of Humanity, with its demigods and devils, which makes it somewhat difficult for the

ordinary observer to take a serious view of what is at least an earnest movement.

The little band of Comtists or Positivists in London, already indeed divided into two, having signalised their imitation of ecclesiasticism by immediate schism, contains several literary men of some reputation. Richard Congreve (born 1818), after a distinguished career at Rugby and Oxford, became a member of this body, resigning his Fellowship and Tutorship, and all his previous associates, and was, we believe, the priest or minister of the original community. His *Essays, Political, Social, and Religious*, published in 1874, were remarkable for a curious devoutness and religiousness, the natural piety which clings to some spirits even after they have given up all objects of worship. During his residence at Oxford in 1855 he published an essay in Roman History and an edition of Aristotle's *Politics*. In later years he has confined himself chiefly to works treating of his special religious and political views. Mr. Frederic Harrison is another member of this lively intellectual community, and is known as a clear and able writer on many current subjects in the chief reviews, as well as by the authorship of a considerable number of works on subjects specially interesting to the disciples of Comte. He is too much a writer of the day, his work in full career, and his reputation still in the course of making,

to be treated fully here. The same may be said of Professor Beesly, Mr. John Henry Bridges, and several other writers of the same school. The four gentlemen named collaborated in the production of a *Translation of Comte's System of Positive Polity, or Treatise on Sociology, instituting the Religion of Humanity*, published in 1875-77.

A period of greater note and greater importance existed for the Positivist school at the time when two such exceptional personalities as George Henry Lewes and George Eliot took their place among its ranks. Of the latter we have spoken already, but have not yet had occasion to speak of the former. Lewes was perhaps a man more remarkable in himself than as a writer, and though his life was spent in the profession of literature he has left but few books of value behind him. Born in 1817, he was, after a somewhat desultory education, placed in the office of a Russian merchant, but having no taste for business, soon abandoned it and selected literature as the serious employment of his life, with physiological studies and dissection for a relaxation. He wrote for the press at first and thought some of his dramatic criticisms worth republishing at a later date. Among his early works are also a couple of novels, which the author is believed to have admired; they were not however appreciated by the public. In 1845 he commenced bringing out his principal

work, the *Biographical History of Philosophy*, which afterwards underwent several refining and enlarging processes till it appeared finally in its third edition in 1871 as the *History of Philosophy from Thales to Comte*. This is undoubtedly a work of great importance and of considerable merit. The narrative is usually careful and sufficiently attractive and the judgments for the most part well weighed and impartial. Some of the earlier articles on the Greek writers, the chapter devoted to the Sophists in particular, show a liveliness of style which brings us quite into the sphere of light reading ; but there is plenty of good heavy solidity to counterbalance this. Yet the information, and even the instruction, is, as a rule, pleasantly conveyed. His other most celebrated work is probably his *Life of Goethe*, which has been highly praised in Germany. Lewes made some big journalistic ventures, taking a prominent part in the foundation of the *Leader*, a rather abortive enterprise, which he supported for many years as dramatic critic. In 1865 he was the first editor of the *Fortnightly Review*, a position which he retained for two years, being then succeeded by Mr. John Morley. In later life Lewes devoted himself more to scientific studies. His last work, which he did not live to finish, was a philosophical treatise on *Problems of Life and Mind*. He died in 1879. As a historian of philosophy, Lewes certainly deserves

a high position in literature ; his work is clear and purposelike, wasting little time, but not refusing the advantages of literary grace. It is a strange contrast to the writer we are next to mention, a historian of philosophy, too, in his way, the projector of a gigantic work which he hardly lived even to lead up to—and in his philosophical creed at least closely approaching to the doctrines of Comte.

Among the most remarkable products of the age, exemplifying at once its great opportunities and its failures, was Thomas Henry Buckle, born 1822, who is called the historian of civilisation, from his great work, but who is now universally considered to have missed the high mark at which he aimed, and to demonstrate rather the ineffectualness of methods which are believed in by partially educated men as capable of all things. Knowledge is power, according to immemorial wisdom, but only when it is tempered by experience, and in conjunction with other qualities. There were many people, however, at the time of Buckle's birth, when the schoolmaster was first supposed to be abroad, who took the proverb literally. He had an education something like that of John Stuart Mill, already referred to, though, if we may use a vulgar witticism, quite different. They were both the creation of books, though the first was under the stern coercion and training of his father, and Buckle only by his own will and

without any guidance whatever. They were both of mild and amiable nature, full of the domestic instinct, and both entirely separated from all influence or sympathy with religion. Mill, however, was in a larger sphere, and a world more open to great influences, and with a sound though hard education was placed in practical life and learned the great necessities of government in the India House, while the other was shut up with his books, reconstructing a world of which he knew nothing from those admirable helps, but in-different fountains of inspiration. Nothing can be more remarkable or more typical of his inner life than the picture of Buckle as presented to us by his biographer, working in a great room, lighted from the roof, and lined with books, shut out from every influence of real life, reading, reading, making volumes of notes, and tracing the action of laws which he knew by their letter, upon men whom he scarcely knew at all. It was in this closely-shut-up hermit's cell in the midst of London that the *History of Civilisation* was written. A very simple mistake originating in this way, by which he took the institution of the Fast Day in Scotland as meaning an extreme ascetism of actual fasting, upon which idea he founded an entire argument, and added many grave reproaches in respect to the gloomy religion of the country—is a case in point : for had Buckle known anything

beyond the words, he would have been aware that religious fasting is in Scotland a habit unknown in practice, and much discountenanced as a relic of Popery. The example is not one of much importance, but it serves to show what was the defect of his mind. Curiously enough, however, this book of limited perceptions and scholastic origin struck the world with that sudden accidental and unreal effect which sometimes makes a man with no particular right to distinction awake to find himself famous. The first volume appeared in 1858, and being merely introductory to the great work, raised a universal expectation. The second appeared in 1861, but even in that he had not as yet begun the history he had planned on so colossal a scale. The third volume was published only after his death in 1862, but before that time the fervour of interest had already abated. He had in the meantime sustained the great shock of the death of his mother, to whom he was devotedly attached, and his own health having given way, had spent the last winter of his life in Egypt. He went to Palestine in the following spring, a pilgrim undevout, and pushed his way as far as Damascus, where, after much suffering, he died. His unaccomplished work, the immense labour with which it was begun, and its sudden failure and dropping off from the great and sudden reputation it brought him, threw a shade of pathos

over the life of one who was nothing if not a student, and to whom books were everything in life. His other gift was that of chess, among the players of which studious game he attained almost the highest rank.

Among other historians of philosophy, special notice must be paid to the important and valuable *History of Speculative Philosophy in the Nineteenth Century*, published in 1846 by Mr. J. D. Morell, who is also known as the author of *Philosophy of Religion*, *Elements of Psychology*, and other kindred works. We have already spoken of Dr. M'Cosh's work on *Scottish Philosophy*. Of later writers Mr. Leslie Stephen, of whom we shall have more to say in a future chapter, has produced an able and scholarly *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*; while Mr. William Edward Hartpole Lecky has done good service to the same cause by his valuable *History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe* and *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne*. Among works dealing with the thinkers of antiquity we may mention Professor Ferrier's brilliant *Lectures on Greek Philosophy*, and the *Lectures on the History of Ancient Philosophy*, by the Rev. William Archer Butler (1814-48), Professor of Moral Philosophy at Trinity College, Dublin.

Unquestionably the foremost of philosophical writers in our own time, who has led up the

science of thought to its latest development, is Mr. Herbert Spencer. Born at Derby in 1820, Mr. Spencer originally adopted the profession of a civil engineer, and made his first appearance in literature with a series of papers on the "Proper Sphere of Government," published in the *Nonconformist* in 1842, and afterwards reprinted in pamphlet form. Later he abandoned the exercise of his profession and was for some years sub-editor of the *Economist*. His first work of importance was *Social Statics: or the Conditions essential to Human Happiness specified, and the First of them developed*, but this was subsequently suppressed. The *Principles of Psychology*, published in 1855, gave the first distinct indication of his views and his method. He applied in this work to the phenomena of the mind the same doctrine of evolution which directed Darwin in his physiological researches. The human mind is not to him the blank supposed by the empirical school, nor, on the other hand, is it provided with innate ideas, but it does contain certain germs of ideas or predisposition to particular ideas which have been transmitted to it by heredity from the experience of its progenitors. This remarkable doctrine had no sooner been laid before the world in the *Principles of Psychology*, than it was found that Mr. Spencer intended to push his doctrine of evolution yet further and apply it to all orders of phenomena, even in political ethics. This programme was put

forth in 1860 in his *System of Synthetic Philosophy*, and carried out with immense labour and equal ability in a succession of works extending over a period of more than twenty years. After the introductory treatise on *First Principles* (1862) came the *Principles of Biology*, of *Psychology* (1872), of *Sociology* (1876), *Ceremonial Institutions* (1879), *Political Institutions* (1882), *Ecclesiastical Institutions* (1885), with the very remarkable *Data of Ethics*, first published in 1879. Since their original publication these books have been, one and all, re-issued in various editions, no works on so profound a subject having probably ever attained such a popularity as has been accorded to the writings of Mr. Herbert Spencer. This is the more remarkable as Mr. Spencer is by no means an easy writer for the unlearned to comprehend; his course of reasoning is indeed clear to those who can see and follow it, but his language is apt to be extremely technical, and the uninstructed have often to pause over each word and weigh its meaning before they can make head or tail of his propositions. But this is the lot of many of us if we venture upon any kind of philosophical reading. It will be observed that Mr. Spencer has confined himself chiefly to biology and sociology, his many works on political and ethical subjects being more or less reducible to these heads.

The other sciences dealing with the visible

world, which Comte had included in his course of study, he has omitted apparently as less essential, though he would in no way discourage their study. The great aim of his philosophy is to encourage the study of the science of life and the science of society¹ and to do practical material good thereby. As regards the Absolute and Infinite, Mr. Spencer's position is equally different from that of Comte and of Hamilton. The existence of some Ultimate Power he does not deny with Comte, he merely says that he does not and cannot possibly know anything about it, nor would he, with Hamilton, say that belief is possible where knowledge fails. The straining into the unseen of involuntary agnostics he would regard as absolutely fruitless and idle, simply from the impossibility of finding out anything concerning the matter; still it is not clear that such an exercise might not be a wholesome discipline for the mind, though it is a foregone conclusion that any conception which man supposes himself to have formed of the Absolute must be broken to pieces sooner or later. Among Mr. Spencer's other works we may quote his *Education; Intellectual, Moral and Physical*, the *Classification of the Sciences*, containing an

¹ With a profound conviction of our own ignorance of the lofty subjects we are here obliged to deal with, it occurs to us that some of our equally uninstructed brethren may perhaps confuse sociology with socialism. We would venture to remind such readers, if there be any such, that Mr. Spencer has always been the consistent champion of individual rights.

exposition of the points on which he disagrees with the Comtist school, the *Study of Sociology*, *Man versus the State*, etc. He was also the editor and superintendent of a remarkable series of works upon *Descriptive Sociology*, dealing with the different features presented by various sections of the human race, among the workers under him in this great undertaking being Professor Duncan of Madras, Dr. Richard Scheppig and Mr. James Collier. The work was discontinued after eight volumes had been published, we believe on account of the enormous expense required for bringing it out. We are prepared to hear that we have not given sufficient space to Mr. Spencer among our philosophical writers; but we confidently hope that he has yet much to teach us, and cannot deal with him as one whose complete work is before the world.

Two extremely bold and independent thinkers whom we have not yet mentioned are a little difficult to place in any classification. James Hinton (1822-75), a man of eminence in the surgical profession as an aurist, was one who groped after truth and never really knew whether he had found it—in which point perhaps he was wise beyond his generation. Much of his life was spent in trying to reason himself into a belief in the Christian faith, in which, Christianity being especially unfitted for the wise, he not

unnaturally failed. He sought for a theory of the Universe which would satisfy the religious emotions of humanity as well as the understanding. The prevailing idea of God he regarded as one distorted and obscured by the interposition of sin. The real Deity was the universal Spirit which was the actuality of all things. In ethics he established the principle of altruism as opposed to individualism, the adoption of which by man was a wilful curbing of the divine Spirit. By genuine altruism man could transcend himself and live the true life in unity with God. Among Hinton's principal works are *Man and his Dwelling-Place*, a work on the relation of science to religion, and the extraordinarily striking *Mystery of Pain*. After his death a collection of his essays was published under the title of *Chapters on the Art of Thinking*. A philosopher of a more material cast was the lamented William Kingdon Clifford (1845-79), Professor of Applied Mathematics at University College, London. He hardly, however, comes within our sphere, for he published nothing in his lifetime, and the works set forth by pious friends after his death are hardly of the nature of literature. As Professor Balfour was lamented in the world of science, so was the loss of Clifford's youthful promise bewailed among those who had watched with interest his bold and original cast of thought and the striking manner in which he

was able to convey the truths he had to set forth to a comparatively unlearned audience. His scientific attainments were great, and he was selected to accompany the Eclipse Expedition to Sicily in 1870. The *Lectures and Essays* published after his death were under the editorship of Professor—now Sir Frederick—Pollock and Mr. Leslie Stephen ; other fragments were issued at later periods by other friends and admirers. His widow, Mrs. W. K. Clifford, is well known as the author of some remarkable novels and many charming stories for children.

Among living writers on philosophical subjects we can just mention the names of Henry Maudsley, late Professor of Medical Jurisprudence at University College, London, editor of the *Journal of Mental Science*, and author of some valuable psychological works, including the *Physiology and Pathology of the Mind, Body and Mind*, etc. ; St. George Mivart, Professor of the Philosophy of Natural History at Louvain, and author of the *Genesis of Species, Contemporary Evolution, the Origin of Human Reason*, and many other works ; Andrew Seth, Professor of Logic, Rhetoric and Metaphysics at St. Andrews, author of *Hegelianism and Personality*, and other works ; and George Croom Robertson, Professor of Philosophy of Mind and Logic at University College, London, editor of *Mind, a Quarterly Review of Psychology and Philosophy*,

editor in a different sense of Grote's *Aristotle*, and author of some minor works on philosophical subjects. *Nous en passons, et des meilleurs*; it would be entirely impossible to give an exhaustive list of writers on these subjects, and we prefer to make no attempt which might bring on us a charge of partiality, where our only fault might be ignorance. There are few ladies to be found among these ranks, but the name of Miss Frances Power Cobbe may be mentioned as that of a clear writer and profound thinker.

Among other departments of thought, the science of Logic has received fully adequate attention in the age of which we are writing. Of the work of Sir William Hamilton and of John Stuart Mill we have already spoken. A most valuable writer on this subject, whose works we are, however, hardly justified in describing as literature, was George Boole (1815-64), Professor of Mathematics at Queen's College, Cork, whose *Mathematical Analysis of Logic* (1847) and *Laws of Thought* (1854) gave almost a new form to the subject with which they dealt by their introduction of mathematical methods and language. Almost equally important was the *Formal Logic* of Augustus de Morgan (1806-71), long Professor of Mathematics at University College, London, which was devoted to the railing off of logic from other sciences of thought by confining its sphere

strictly to pointing out the correct modes of reasoning from the premises brought to it, which might be true or false for all the logician cared. To argue that green cheese is full of maggots, the moon is made of green cheese, therefore the moon is full of maggots, would be sound reasoning from the point of view of formal logic ; the premises and conclusion may all be false, but the mode of deduction is true. Professor de Morgan was not only known in the field of logic or mathematics, but had also a reputation as a writer on general subjects in a whimsical, paradoxical style which had a perpetual freshness about it. His *Budget of Paradoxes*, republished from the *Athenæum*, is a work of great ability and humour if at times rather aggravatingly dogmatic in tone. Another weighty writer on the same subject was William Stanley Jevons (1835-82), Professor of Political Economy at University College, London, whose works on the *Principles of Science* (1874-77) and on *Logic* (1870) are of acknowledged authority. Dr. William Thomson, late Archbishop of York (1819-90), made a valuable contribution to the literature of the same subject with his *Outline of the Laws of Thought*. A more famous prelate, Richard Whately, Archbishop of Dublin (1787-1863), was also a writer on logic, but not in our period ; he lived, however, long into the present reign and contributed to its literature among other

books the delightful skit on the new guess-work criticism, called *Historic Doubts regarding Napoleon Buonaparte*, and on a graver subject an *Introduction to Political Economy*. The last-named science has had its full share of attention also. We owe some valuable lectures on this subject to Dr. Whewell. A more entire devotee of the science was John Ramsay M'Culloch (1779-1864), originally a journalist in Scotland and for some time editor of the *Scotsman*, in later years Professor of Political Economy at University College, London, and finally Comptroller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. His most important work was the *Principles of Political Economy* (1849); among others were a *Dictionary of Commerce and Literature of Political Economy*. In more recent days few works of more weighty authority on this subject have appeared than the *History of Prices* of the late James Edwin Thorold Rogers, Professor of Political Economy at Oxford, a work of quite unique value in its own department.

A writer of mark, Walter Bagehot (1826-77), is perhaps best known to the world as an economist, though also the author of some remarkable works on history and philosophical philosophy. His *English Constitution*, *Physics and Politics*, and *Lombard Street* are the best-known. His literary and biographical studies were posthumous publications.

CHAPTER IV

THE YOUNGER POETS

THE younger section of the poets who have illustrated this age could not be headed by any name so appropriate as that of Matthew Arnold, younger not so much in time—for he was not more than a dozen years in age after Lord Tennyson—but because not only of much later publication, but of a mind and temper which never got far beyond the academic circle or remembered that the atmosphere of the classics is not that most familiar and dear to all men. It is perhaps this atmosphere more than anything else which has prevented him and others of his brethren from ever penetrating into the heart of the country, and which forms a kind of argument against that careful training which it is now the fashion to claim for every literary workman—the “wood-notes wild,” which once men chiefly believed in as the voice of poetry, having lost their acceptance

among those growing theories of development and descent which would make of every poet a well-defined and recognisable product of the influences surrounding him. If this could be said with truth of any group of poets, it might be of Matthew Arnold, Clough, Swinburne, and some later names—to their advantage no doubt in the way of perfect versification, but to their great disadvantage in respect to nature and life. The intellectual difficulties of a highly-organised age and that “doubt,” unkindly and unmusical spirit, which has been converted into a patron saint or demon by the fashion of the times, are not poetical founts of inspiration, and the old Helicon has run somewhat dry for the general reader. Matthew Arnold (1822-88), the son of Dr. Arnold of Rugby, and occupied for the greater part of his life in the service of his country as H.M.’s Inspector of Schools, is the poet of the Universities, of the intellectual classes who derive their chief life therefrom, either at first hand or in reflection; he has not in him the mixture of common life and feeling which can conciliate that inner niche with the wider one of the general world, or the warm inspiration of passion and emotional nature which goes to the common heart. The old audience to which the old poets appealed, the *donne che hanno intelletto d’amore* are left out, unless perhaps when they belong to Girton, so are the

children, except those precocious beings who lisp in Greek. The audience which is left him is perhaps the one which he would have preferred, just as Dr. Isaac Watts would no doubt have preferred his audience of the chapels and nurseries ; but it is a limited audience, and not that of the greatest poets.

It would be difficult, however, to find a man who made a more prominent appearance on the stage of general literature in his time. His essays, critical and otherwise, kept him very distinctly before the world : and this, and other partly artificial reasons raised his name to such a point of general knowledge and acquaintance, that a selection of his poems was made and published in his lifetime, an honour which falls to few poets. These we may take as his own selection of what he thought most likely to live. And we find among them the two poems on which most of those who esteem him most highly are willing to rest his fame—*Thyrsis* and the *Scholar Gipsy* : both of them comparatively short, and so much more individual than most of his poetical works as to touch a chord of sympathy wanting in many of the others. The extreme diffuseness of much of his poetry is indeed one of the faults which will always keep it outside the popular heart. There is something in the flow of even rhyme, page after page, long, fluent, smooth, looking as if it might

go on for ever, which appals the reader. Life is not long enough, as the word goes, for *Empedocles on Etna*. Mr. Browning in his *Cleon* has given us the spirit and fine concentrated essence of a philosopher of antiquity in a few pages. In the hands of Mr. Arnold this revelation takes almost a book, and with how much less success! The same thing may be said of other poems, of which even the conception appears to be taken from an elder poet but so amplified as to turn a fine suggestion into weariness. Wordsworth puts his "Yarrow" and "Yarrow Revisited"—which indeed are not on the highest level of his poetry—into poems which a child might learn by heart, without difficulty: but when Mr. Arnold visits the scene of Obermann again and again, each pilgrimage is so flooded with endless streams of verse that the attention of the reader is drowned and carried away like a straw on the tide. The same is the case in the poems called *Switzerland* and addressed to a certain Marguerite, which probably would never have been thought of had not Wordsworth dedicated a long string of little lyrics to Lucy, lines not only of the greatest beauty, but so brief that they lodge where they fall in the willing memory, and cannot be forgotten. The lesser singer draws out his much lighter theme into link after link of unmemorable verse. That the older poet should influence the

younger even to the point of actual suggestion is a thing perfectly natural and sanctioned by all the tenets of the time, which demand indeed that one should be the descendant of the other. Perhaps it is also a law of development that the successor should be more lengthy in proportion as he is less strong.

To return, however, to the special poems which we have selected as the most living and individual of Matthew Arnold's poetry, both the *Scholar Gipsy* and *Thyrsis* are full of the atmosphere of Oxford and of youth. They are indeed rather two different parts of the same poem than independent inspirations, though the latter embodies rather the regretful looking-back of the elder man upon those early scenes, than the actual musings of the young one. Their music and freshness and reality interest all readers: yet we can more readily imagine these poems to be conned over and repeated to each other with that enthusiasm which adopts and dwells upon every word, by those who "wear the gown," than by any other class. The scenery of the academic city with all its spires and towers, the centre of all thought—the fresh and fragrant hillsides and dewy fields surrounding it—the mild mystery of the wandering scholar, a musing and pensive shadow to be half seen by dreaming eyes about all those familiar haunts—are set before us with many

beautiful touches. The vision is entirely harmonious with the scene; there is no conflict in it or force of opposing life, no tragedy, no passion—the shade of the Scholar Gipsy is not one that expiates any doom. He roams about the places he loved, pondering the past, amid all the soft reflections of the evening, dim, pensive, but not unhappy, a wanderer by choice, fulfilling the gentle dream of fate that pleased him best. When this visionary figure gives place to the more real one of Thyrsis who is gone, and all the landscape fills with the brighter vision of the friend who but now was here, and the vacancy which he will never fill again, a warmer interest, yet the same, envelops the hillside and the fields. Yet there is no passion even of grief in the lament. Thyrsis is not mourned like Lycidas or Adonais. He is gone yet he is there, and there, too, is still the dewy, dim and fragrant nature, and the prevailing softness of the clouds—"Our tree yet crowns the hill—Our Scholar travels yet the loved hillside." All is calm and pensive, a sorrow of the mind, a wistful regret. The two poems naturally hang together, two parts of one elegy, mildly mournful, nothing like despair in either, the friend shading into the more distant vision, the shadow becoming more distinct in the friend: while the charm is enhanced by the atmosphere of the evening, the breath of nature, the city close at

hand with all its teeming young life—and wandering figures here and there, roaming as Thyrsis roamed in his time, keeping up the long continuance, which is never more dreamy nor more persistent than in such a place, where the generations follow each other so quickly, with so little interval between. These are poems of Oxford, of a phase of life which has become very prominent in recent times—but also of a purely vague emotion, a visionary sentiment which touches no depths.

The poems of Arthur Hugh Clough (1823-61), who is the Thyrsis of these verses, were of a more robust, but less polished kind. His *Bothie of Tober-na-voirlich* is his chief title to fame. It is the narrative in hexameters, a style exceedingly difficult to manage in English, and very successfully done, of the adventures of a reading party in the Highlands, the musings, humours and adventures of half-a-dozen young men, some of them distinguished in after days, and representing different classes of young life, thought and possibilities. The picture it affords in the long rolling Greek line which throws a quaint and foreign aspect upon nineteenth-century English, of the Highland landscape, the straitened lodging, the rapid and sparkling stream, the bathings, shootings and wanderings of the party, the big athlete and the small scholar, with their attendant gillies,

gamekeepers and Highland lassies, is full of effect and a cheerful reality; that Arthur, famous for headers, should afterwards have developed into Arthur Stanley, Dean of Westminster, and that his gigantic companion should have become a Cabinet Minister gives a little, but only a little, additional interest. The poem in itself has all the elements of life: it smells of the heather and the peat, though the young heroes are frankly alien to the soil. The other poems of Clough, like those of Matthew Arnold, are full of these same breathings of doubt which are so little harmonious with poetry, and which are here specially cloudy, mephitic and confused with the crudities of youth. Endless moanings over the condition of man and discussions of what lies before him in a dim unseen, endless upbraidings of the God who according to these young men most probably does not exist at all, and consequently ought not to be blamed for matters in which He could have had no hand—are unsatisfactory enough in prose, but they are entirely out of harmony with verse. It is seldom, we fear, that divine philosophy is “not harsh or crabbed as dull fools suppose, but musical as is Apollo’s lute,” at least in modern poetry. And above all it is difficult to follow this strain through the measured cadences which are associated in our minds with quite other sentiments, with romantic story and magnanimous

human feeling, the sacrifices of love, and the achievements of valour, all infinitely more interesting to the human race than the endless turnings over of an academic theme in an unsettled mind.

Algernon Swinburne belongs to a still younger generation, but holds a more distinct and recognised place. He was born in 1837, and was educated at Oxford like Arnold and Clough, though unlike them—yet like Shelley, Southey, and some others—he left the University without taking his degree. If his predecessors were academic and classical, deeply imbued with the music and the spirit of antiquity, he was still more so: and his first poem which attracted the public notice, *Atalanta in Calydon*, published in 1861, at once revealed a poet, master of all the harmonies into which words can be woven. A critic of the nineteenth century may be allowed to say that the poet who has to go so far afield for his theme has not any definite message for his generation, but this is not a criticism which can be spoken with boldness, since classical themes are naturally those which lie most ready to the hand of the young singer who has been trained and fed upon them from his childhood. It has, we fear, however, been proved by many years' experience that Mr. Swinburne has not very much to say to us. He has said it in the most exquisite manner and at the greatest length. He

is a musician, unsurpassed anywhere, perhaps unparalleled among ourselves; but we cannot attribute to this great contemporary poet, who is probably destined to take the first place in English poetry when the career of the present Patriarch is over, any influence upon the temper or moral growth of the time, any heavenly tone of consolation or instruction in the weariness of the world's lengthening years. It is a pity, perhaps, to be content with the effects of one art while working with the implements of another, and Music, though it has attained in this century to a pre-eminence never claimed by its masters before, has not so many tones in its harp, nor so many capabilities as the still diviner art of poetry. It is with regret that we confess that the present heir of the highest fame is a musician in words, though of the highest kind, rather than a poet.

Mr. Swinburne's first poem was followed in 1862 by the tragedy of *Chastelard*, in which the modern fault of extreme length once more lessens the power of a great deal of most harmonious poetry, and a fine conception of the dramatic capabilities of his subject. His *Poems and Ballads*, which followed this work, were marked by a freedom of tone and indifference to any standard of morality which has done the poet serious and lasting harm, and may prevent him from ever

attaining the highest honours open to an English poet. It was doubly unfortunate that the first publication of those shorter poems by which a general public can best test the excellence which has been already certified to it by critics, should have been of this character ; for it made a bar at once between the poet and a great part of his natural audience. There is much nonsense talked in these days about the Young Person and the things which are unfit for her eyes, which perhaps blinds some writers to the very obvious fact that there is a large portion of the intelligent public, the best and most faithful of readers, to which uncleanness, however clothed, in the most gorgeous robes or with all the false glow of passion, is always repulsive. In France it is supposed to be simple hypocrisy when such a distaste is professed by a middle-aged reader, and even in England there are critics who assert that mature men and women prefer books which have to be kept under lock and key. But that this is a most serious and great mistake it wants, we think, but little experience of the English reader to show. Whether, perhaps, it was not also a mistake to withdraw the first series of Mr. Swinburne's shorter poems from circulation it is difficult to say. It is better, perhaps, to have the courage of one's opinions, and having, not inconsiderately it is to be supposed, taken a step, to stand fast in

it. This publication, however, made a pause in the career of the poet, and stopped his progress in the acquaintance and affection of his countrymen. Other eccentricities, impassioned essays upon certain favourite subjects, praise and blame distributed with too violent and extravagant a hand, perplexed both critics and readers. A man who foams at the mouth when some names are mentioned, and falls upon his knees and worships some others, makes an exhibition thereby of extravagance which the world is too apt to hold as allied with folly; and the days are past, thanks to the noble sense and manliness of our recent leaders in all the branches of literature, when the world could shrug its shoulders and console itself that "Great wits to madness nearly are allied."

We are happy to think, however, that later publications have remedied this unfortunate beginning, and set Mr. Swinburne more or less right with his contemporaries. A second series of *Poems and Ballads* found many eager readers, and his publications, if they do not move the universal mind as have done during many years the successive productions of Mr. Browning and Lord Tennyson, yet rouse an even warmer enthusiasm and interest among a smaller but energetic crowd of admirers and lovers. He published the tragedy of *Bothwell* in 1874, returning to that ever-attractive and romantic drama of Mary of

Scotland, in whose wonderful story the previous tragedy of *Chastelard* and this new theme were both involved. *Erectheus* was published in 1876, *Studies in Song* in 1881, the *Poems and Ballads*, second series, in 1878—along with many shorter works both in poetry and prose. Mr. Swinburne's views are Republican in the highest degree, as is shown by the *Ode on the Proclamation of the French Republic* (1870) and *Songs before Sunrise* (1871), and that they are also violent and extreme is apparent from the fact that in one of his last published poems he is believed to have advocated the assassination of the present Czar, as an allowable and patriotic act. This sort of sentiment, which would be dangerous and treasonable in another country, is, in our security from all such political frenzies, considered only whimsical, if not laughable, in our own. The last short poem we have seen of Mr. Swinburne's is a short and beautiful Threnody published in the *Athenæum* in November 1890, written, we believe, on the death of Philip Bourke Marston, but so penetrating in sadness yet hope, that we are ready personally to accept it as covering a multitude of sins. His last volume, just published, is too recent for any attempt at criticism, and it is perhaps better for the poet's reputation that it should not be discussed at large.

Of a not unsimilar order of mind and ranking

naturally with the Musician - Poet comes the Painter-Poet, Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-82), born an Englishman but of Italian parentage. A man in no way following the fashion of other men, refusing either to exhibit his pictures, or to publish his poems, he was for many years the private idol of a small number of admirers to whom his works were a mystery and a creed, rather than the object of legitimate poetical admiration. There is a story told that at the death of his wife, which took place at a very early age, he buried in her coffin the manuscript of his poems. It can scarcely be supposed that the sanctity of the grave was violated in order to recover them, so we must believe that copies had been made and preserved either by the poet himself or someone closely interested in him, which detracts somewhat from the pathos of the act; at all events many years later they did see the light, when the faith of his worshippers was justified by the instant appreciation of the world. These poems have a sort of subtle connection with the pictures of their author, so that it is difficult to read the one without an attendant vision of the other forming itself before our eyes. In the case of the *Blessed Damozel*, which is perhaps the most popular and largely quoted of all his works, this is not wonderful, for one of his larger pictures is of the same subject, and sets heaven before us as

a succession or maze of lovers' walks where the presumably reunited pairs stroll about together in a perfect but somewhat *banal* bliss. The Blessed Damozel is perhaps the most complete vision of flesh and blood which ever was transported into the heavenly dominion: her arm warms the bar upon which she leans as she looks down from the sky to see her lover wandering forlorn on the earth. For this very reason, no doubt, as well as for the poetry, this poem achieved the conquest even of the general reader, to whose halting imagination so much help was given. The difficulty of framing a paradise which shall respond to the highest aspirations of the mind has been very largely acknowledged. To depict it as a sort of celestial land of the Decameron, where youths and maidens can wander for ever through fragrant bosquets and solitudes not too secluded, where other youths and maidens are within reach and one way of loving and enjoying is enough for the simple mind—is, at least, an easy and primitive method of putting aside more difficult problems.

Many of Mr. Rossetti's ballads have great picturesqueness and power of impressing the imagination, and form a very popular portion of his work. There is a wildness and dark atmosphere of fate in most of these that separates them from the old inspiration of the primitive ballad,

which though often tragic rarely delights in the darker elements, but even with its deepest gloom combines a consciousness of the larger course of simple nature always going on outside the story. In form he has too often broken the melody of verse by an elaborate refrain supposed to increase its archaic features, and generally understood to be borrowed from the antique ballad. We doubt, however, whether that interrupting note is ever to be found in the genuine narrative ballads of the earlier ages, at least to anything like the extent in which we find it in modern adaptations of the style. The shorter lyric, a popular song intended for a sort of concerted use, bringing in the audience to help the singer, no doubt uses this artifice largely, but rarely or never, we think, the minstrel with his long narrative, in which we find it often an intolerable interruption in mere reading and which would have been still more so in any oral rendering at first hand, when the audience were breathless to hear the story, and interested in a much less degree by the music. *The King's Tragedy*, which is in almost every detail founded upon the sad and ghastly narrative of the murder of James of Scotland, is without this interruption, and is one of the most powerful of Rossetti's poems. A very different thing, the pitiful and painful sketch of *Jenny*, is also full of melancholy power, reminding us, however, more of Alfred de

Musset and the sentiment of French modern poetry than of anything in our own age or language.

The name of William Morris is another name to which every reader of poetry has learned to respond; the serious mingling in him of classic inspiration, and that, classic also in its way, which still breathes from the ice-fields of the North, and replaces the gods of Olympus by the Gothic deities, bloody and grim, of the Scandinavian mythology—is curiously combined with the most modern sentiments in another sphere, and those fantastic political theories which never have been carried out by flesh and blood, and which to all appearance, whether desirable or undesirable, never will be carried out. His beginning of poetry was made with the *Life and Death of Jason*, in full pride of academic traditions and youth. Since then the Sagas have replaced the songs of Greece in his mind, and we have been made familiar with the uncouth names and primitive story of those Niblungs, whom Carlyle first introduced to English knowledge, and which have since inspired so many writers. Far off as are the classic shores, we are not sure that Iceland and the snows are not farther off still, and less easy to parallel with the realities of life, or our necessities in a modern age—and it is curious to note how universally, whatever may be their theories of the present

existence, our poets go to seek their themes abroad and afar out of our ken and knowledge. It was seldom so with the older poets. It is not so, let us be grateful, with the greatest in our own modern world. Lord Tennyson and Mr. Browning have both employed, if not always the living present of to-day, yet the sphere of an antiquity from which we more immediately derive, the skies of Christendom, the atmosphere which we still breathe, and which they have found sufficient, as Shakespeare did, for all the noblest uses of poetry. It is difficult to understand how universal is the other bias in the second rank of poets which must soon be the first under our firmament. Any attention which Mr. Morris has ever devoted to the immediate needs of the world in which he lives, or its story which is as varied, as rich, as full of human interest and pathos and solemnity as any other, has been expended in a few extravagant Socialist hymns, still less connected with the daily life of humanity than are the Sagas. It is, however, not on either of these, the one pardoned and dropped into oblivion for the love we bear him as a poet, the other accepted because it is all we can get from him—but on the *Earthly Paradise*, of which the first portion appeared in 1868, that we turn our attention with the warmest pleasure, in discussing Mr. Morris's fame as a poet.

It cannot be said, however, that in this poem

or collection of poems, any more than in the classic tale of Jason or the wilder measure of the Sagas, the poet has taken any trouble to adapt his strains to the life or needs of his time. The *Earthly Paradise* is a collection of tales chiefly classical told by a number of wanderers in search of the Golden Age and happy valley, who come to port in a city such as never was by sea or shore, where the Elders and the people come together to hear tales of wonder, and are held in profound attention to these legends a whole year through. In truth the tales themselves could scarcely, save in a few instances, have been read to eager listeners in the most obscure of cities. And the aspect of the Wanderers is that of men weary and without hope, who have failed in their quest, and have no courage to return, and yet long, unhoping, for their northern world, and the use and wont upon which they have turned their backs of their own will. This affords the dim and mystic background which the poet loves for his figures, lotus-eaters of a sadder strain, who pay for the hospitality of their civic hosts by that story-telling which is always, in primitive days, a passport to popular favour. The poetry of Mr. Morris falls in with a harmonious cadence into this scheme ; there is a dying fall in it which embodies the sadness yet sweetness of the musing, the rest yet weariness, the monotony of repose, yet ever-varying relief of

poetry, with a subtle charm. The two or three mediæval legends which break the monotony of classical story will always remain the popular favourites. For our personal taste we would wish there had been more like the "Proud King."

Since the day of the *Earthly Paradise* Mr. Morris has been severely classical or still more severely Scandinavian. The Sagas latterly have entirely won the day. And whether we may hope that there will ever come a time in which he will think Englishmen as interesting as Niblungs it is hard to say; but we fear that after so many years given to the Sigurds and Gudruns it will be difficult for the poet to content himself with anything in his own time or economy. His dream of the Socialist paradise in which every man is as good as, nay better than, every other, has up to this time, however, been written only in prose. Perhaps some wholesome human instinct prevents the golden harp from being employed in the praise of Golden Dustmen or other monsters of the coming time.

Mr. Coventry Patmore has not attained the same eminence as Mr. Morris. He is the poet of love, but of that chastened and dignified love of marriage which has been much neglected by poets, whose preference for the prefatory chapter, the romance of love unfulfilled, the wooings and misadventures and disappointments of youth, has a

certain natural justice and reason : while the other muse of love illegitimate and unpermitted, the Passion which is tragic and full of deadly wishes and surprises, is to the greater number the most interesting study. This, too, is perhaps comprehensible enough : for the conflict of will and fate, the struggle which is mortal, and involves despair, the rapture which is always keen with misery, have many elements which beguile the imagination. He who in the face of all these chooses the tempered and sober path of married life for the subject of his song, exercises a great self-denial, just as he does who paints duty and goodness in preference to all tumults of existence. That sky which most constantly embodies heaven is the least safe for the painter, and a perfect life is the hardest for the poet. The one has need of clouds, of threatening storms and darkness to set forth and enhance the equilibrium of the serene and lovely day : while to our human imaginations life that is without trouble is deficient in interest and leaves nothing to say. The happy have no history, as says one of the oldest of proverbs. Mr. Patmore made the great venture of ignoring this in the beginning of his career, and of weaving all his beautiful garland of verses out of roses alone. He risked his fame upon a story of sweet propitious loveliness and truth, scarcely ruffled by a lover's doubts, and the faint and delicate

difference between delight anticipated and delight attained. The result was a very charming volume of smoothly-flowing verse, which has given him a peculiar, but distinct niche among the poets of his generation. Later work has shown that he has command of other notes than those of the Epithalamium: but the Marriage song will still and always be his chief distinction. The *donne che hanno intelletto d'amore* are here indeed the true audience, those readers whom Dante, no Troubadour, chose for his sonnets, and whose excellences were never more sweetly sung or with greater modesty and self-restraint, than by the author of the *Angel in the House*. But it is almost needless to add that for showy effects or the high lights and shadows of passion this is not the place to come. It is a poetry suffused with the warmest sunshine, the light of happiness and household love.

We fear that it would be difficult to allot to Mr. Lewis Morris any such place as has been given to his namesake in the poetry of our day, though at the same time we must allow that he has a great following and that the *Epic of Hades* is to be found in many unsuspected places where other poets more approved by the critics have found no entry. This poem was published in 1877, and is now, we understand, in a twenty-sixth or twenty-seventh edition, an

answer to all cavillers of which we cannot contest the power. It does not at all resemble the works of Mr. Martin Tupper, yet it has inherited something of the same kind of fame which spread the *Proverbial Philosophy* broadcast over the land. Mr. Lewis Morris's work, however, is neither proverbial nor is it philosophy. It is a lurid drama in verse of the unseen world and the punishment and purgation of spirits. There is a great deal of sulphur and rolling vapour, and descriptions of a kind which supply the defect of imagination in the reader. It is, in short, a poem which has reversed the conditions of many great poems and pleased the masses without pleasing those whose business—often self-claimed—it is to lead those masses in the way they should go. Mr. Morris has published one or two series of "Songs" (*Of Two Worlds, By a New Writer*, etc.) which have been taken a little more seriously by the literary world. His "Ode on the Queen's Jubilee" was published with a kind of semi-authority, as if to take the place of that which the Laureate was not able to provide for that solemnity. But this was probably, we may be allowed to hope, accidental, and not the result of any formal selection.

We have placed much too far down in the list the work of a humorous and mirth-loving pair: one of whom, Professor Aytoun, has been already noticed in another connection: while the other,

Sir Theodore Martin, happily still remaining with us, has added some grave poetry, and much admirable poetical translation to the amusing *chef-d'œuvre* which, though chiefly consisting of parodies and accordingly of the character of criticism rather than of original poetry, still lasts and is read and delighted in widely, forty years after its publication—a fate which has never fallen to any such collection, except perhaps the *Rejected Addresses* of Horace and James Smith. The *Ballads of Bon Gaultier* (1858) have outlived many a volume of serious verse and some of the works which they held up to the laughing ridicule of the reader. The excellence of the parody of Locksley Hall has been already referred to. It is difficult even for those whose admiration of the original poem is most sincere, to be quite sure which is the genuine and which the mimic measure, so admirable is the travesty, in which there is no venom, but the most perfect good-natured fun and wit, which rather glorifies than detracts from the poem. The different hands of the two writers have never been quite identified, but we believe that in this particular triumph of gentle satire and fine versification Sir Theodore Martin was the chief if not the only artist, while to Aytoun belonged the amusing ballad of the MacTavish, whose national peculiarities are so delightfully set forth. Professor Aytoun was also the author of the stirring

and martial *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers*, including the "Burial of Dundee," the "March of the Cameron Men," the "Isle of Scots," and several others, which without attaining to the level of Scott, or even of Macaulay's *Lays*, are fine poems, catching both the ear and interest: his pseudo-drama of *Firmilian* has been already mentioned in connection with another school of poets. He produced also a long dramatic poem upon *Bothwell*, a subject which has attracted several poets of this generation. Sir Theodore Martin's works have been many. His translations from Goethe, Horace, Catullus, Heine, are faithful and spirited, and reproduced these lyrics perhaps as well as it is possible to reproduce in one language the peculiarities of verse in another. A modern and living language presents perhaps the greatest difficulties in this way, and the translator's least successful work is that taken from Heine, whose poems, we are inclined to think, are beyond any translator's power. Though these previous works were not much in the way of serious prose-writing, yet Sir Theodore had the honour of being chosen by the Queen to write the *Life of the Prince Consort*, a royal task of which he acquitted himself with much discretion and effect.

The death of Lord Lytton (1831-91) which occurred so short a time ago gives a melancholy interest to any discussion of his poetry; but this

indeed we shall not attempt. He was the son of the eminent novelist Bulwer, afterwards Bulwer-Lytton, and the first bearer of the title, and was therefore the heir of a kind of genius as well as more substantial advantages and disadvantages. He had a considerable mastery of the art of poetry, and that of turning a modern novel into a poetical narrative, as in *Lucile* (published in 1860), with grace and animation, and he was the author of several musical and flowing ballads : but this is scarcely enough to make a poet. He was one of those writers whose poetical gift makes a pleasing accompaniment to their life without being in any way its principal occupation or interest. *Glenarvon*, one of his later published books, had a higher aim and more serious meaning than *Lucile*, yet otherwise was much of the same kind, a narrative in verse which might just as well have been in prose. His *Fables in Song* are probably the portion of his compositions which will last the longest ; some of them are fine, visionary, and poetical, the " Blue Mountains " in particular rising to our recollection as a charming rendering of the poetic wistfulness and strain towards a distant good, which recedes as the pilgrim advances, and is never fulfilled. These poems are of a higher class altogether than the volumes of verse produced by the elder Lord Lytton, his father, of which there is not much to say. Robert, Earl

Lytton, had many other distinctions and accomplishments besides that of poetry, but the muse was dear to him, and he died in the very act of writing a last verse in a volume published after his death—the ink of which was not dry when his spirit passed away, an end well worthy of the highest poet.

There remain, in addition to a number of poets of milder reputation who are still living to add to their works, a few who have ended their life's career, and of whom we can do no more than record the names. The late Dean of Wells, Edward Plumptre, contributed much graceful verse, not perhaps of sufficient importance to survive his generation to the literature of his time; an accomplishment also possessed by several dignified ecclesiastics of the same rank, as has been already noted. Mortimer Collins (1827-76), a writer of a very different class, whose light and musical verses have much charm, has also a right to be mentioned in a record of English contemporary poetry. The same may be said of Philip Bourke Marston, a poet whose life was clouded by the great calamity of blindness, and whose light was thus left in incompleteness and quenched in trouble and sorrow. A writer of verse who must almost be put in a class by himself was Charles Stuart Calverley (1831-84). He was like Yorick "a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy,"

gifted with an extraordinary ingenuity in producing and manipulating his little tricks of verse and scholarly *jeux d'esprit*, which, together with the wild pranks that he played when an undergraduate, have secured him an undying memory at both universities. Those who were at Harrow or at Oxford or Cambridge with him still regard with some of the wondering admiration of old days the extraordinary powers which seemed to make any degree of future fame possible to the brilliant young writer. But the hopes thus aroused were never destined to be fulfilled. Perhaps he never could have done anything greater than the graceful and witty trifles, of which we are sometimes tempted to say in the midst of our admiration, that this man was doing for work what others do—not so well, certainly—for play. But Calverley's powers had little chance of being thoroughly developed, a serious accident on the ice having practically disabled him, before reaching middle age, from any further continued efforts. His translations from the classics and his Greek and Latin verse have deservedly given him a place among scholars, quite as high as the immortal "Ode to Beer," or any other of the great little efforts of his youth entitle him to. Calverley has had many imitators; among the most successful may be mentioned the present writer's old school-fellow, James Kenneth Stephen (1859-92), whose

recent melancholy death cut short a life full of the highest promise. The quaint humour and wonderful facility of rhythm shown in his published verses have only quite recently been displayed to the world in the two little collections entitled respectively *Lapsus Calami* and *Quo Musa tendis?* but his remarkable gifts in this direction had long been known to the school and college friends who remember eagerly scanning each new number of the *Etonian*—a short-lived school publication, then edited, if we recollect right, by Mr. G. N. Curzon, recently Under-Secretary of State for India, for some gem of comic verse from his pen. Mr. Stephen had done some good journalistic work for the *St. James's Gazette* and other papers, and it was his intention, had he lived, to devote himself to serious prose writing. An additionally melancholy association attaches to his name from the fact that he had been tutor to the late Duke of Clarence, whose death preceded his by a few weeks only.

The well-known critic, Mr. H. D. Traill, has, in an article very recently published, congratulated (and scared) the readers of the day by the alarming information that at least fifty minor poets, and these of no mediocre kind, live and sing among us, each with a name and following, notwithstanding the continual self-attributed censure that ours is a prosaic age. A prosaic age no doubt it is, in

which poetry has a less recognised place than when Byron, Shelley, Wordsworth, and Coleridge were its representatives among us ; but perhaps this is partly caused by the very extension of the faculty of verse, and the transmutation of many who were the poet's chosen audience into his imitators or rivals—feeble imitators, hopeless rivals, yet sufficiently in the stream to be drawn away from that noble part of the appreciative listener, without whom Shakespeare himself might speak in vain. There is no doubt, for instance, that in the division of the poetical world which is occupied by women there are twenty at least whose inspiration is stronger, and their composition at least as refined, as that which gave to Mrs. Hemans and Miss Landon a position and fame which is never aspired to by those gentler singers of to-day. The names of Christina Rossetti and Jean Ingelow, for example, would have been placed much higher among their contemporaries had their work been produced in the beginning of the century. Having acknowledged, as has been done in a previous chapter, that no woman has yet come to the highest honour in this divine art, it may be added that these ladies are neither of them the mere feminine voices, small and sweet, with which a previous age was content, but have a good right to be called poets, and have written much which the general reader may well accept

with pleasure and gratitude. These are no idle singers of an empty day, but true and gentle minstrels, illustrating in many a subdued yet musical measure the story of human life, and more wise than some of their greater brethren, contenting themselves with that, without flying to remote antiquity to repeat over and over an oft-told tale. The same may be said of Dora Greenwell, Mrs. Craik, Mrs. Knox, Mrs. Pfeiffer, and others, in respect to lyrical poems. Mrs. Webster, Mrs. Hamilton King, and Miss Harwood have struck a bolder string in the form of the poetical drama—with no inconsiderable success.

Mr. Robert Bridges, whose modesty or indifference to fame has kept him hitherto much out of the knowledge of the crowd, ought on his intrinsic merits to have more space in this record than it is possible to accord to him. We can only allude here to a little collection of *Shorter Poems* recently published, extracted from his larger works, in which some exquisite little lyrics will be found. Mr. W. E. Henley has cultivated melody less than force, and may be said to be on the Browning side of our poetical bands, and full of energy and power.

At the end of all comes a graceful and lively band, the troubadours of modern time, the singers of the drawing-room and studio, touching with light lays the popular humorous affectations and

follies as they fly. The chief of these social poets is Mr. Frederick Locker, who in our time may be said to have set the fashion of those seductive criticisms of life which are so airy and brilliant, and which carry home an occasional sarcasm and reproof in amusing and animated verses which even the culprit cannot but enjoy. Mr. Austin Dobson, Mr. Alfred Austin and Mr. Andrew Lang are the chief members of this bright band, and are all, we record with pleasure, in full exercise of their faculty, and likely in their varying ways to give us, we hope, much more.

The other singers who still have their laurels to earn are too numerous to name. Mr. William Watson, striking at once a graver and a stronger note, may be instanced as an example of them. And mention may also be made here of two sad spirits, soon cut off, Constance Naden, whose poems were of great promise, if of too metaphysical a tone, and Amy Levy, a young Jewess, in whom there is a glimpse of a more subtle inspiration—too soon quenched, however, to enable us to do more than sadly guess that it might have come to a more than ordinary power had it ever been permitted to reach the regions of the maturer soul.

CHAPTER V

THE YOUNGER NOVELISTS

THERE is perhaps no name so influential and important in the imaginative literature of the half-century as that of George Eliot, 1819-80 (Marian Evans, Mrs. Lewes, Mrs. Cross, however the reader chooses to call her). Notwithstanding the pre-eminence of Dickens and Thackeray in the history of fiction, the new and anonymous writer who in 1857 stepped suddenly into fame and a resplendent place in contemporary literature, remains even more remarkable than they in the perspective of the time. Her art is not in the least like theirs ; it is in one sense deeper, free of the vulgarities and commonplaces of the one, and of the limitation imposed upon himself by the other. Both of these greatest novelists of our time were Londoners, and devoted to the elucidation, one of the lower, and the other of the upper region of the human society which gathers there

as in a centre. Ladies and gentlemen were out of Dickens's sphere altogether, and though the greater part of his life as a successful and famous man was spent in their society he never learned how to draw them. On the other hand, it was ladies and gentlemen chiefly whom Thackeray understood, though his lightning glance penetrated a bourgeois group here and there, and all the servants, dependants, and hangers-on of the great people, with that swift and sudden illumination which is more apt to betray the grotesque attitudes of the crowd than its better ordinary of patience, kindness and humanity. But George Eliot's inspiration came from the country, where nature is less shaped and trained, and where the conventionalities, which are even more rigid than in more artificial society, are so patent to the seeing eye, that the satirist need be no sharper than the humorist, and may almost fulfil his office lovingly. Another question which has been constantly put to this age, and which is pursued with greater zeal every day, as to the position of women in literature and the height which it is in their power to attain, was solved by this remarkable woman in a way most flattering to all who were and are fighting the question of equality between the two halves of mankind ; for here was visibly a woman who was to be kept out by no barriers, who sat down quietly from the beginning of her career in

the highest place, and if she did not absolutely excel all her contemporaries in the revelation of the human mind and the creation of new human beings, at least was second to none in those distinguishing characteristics of genius. Even that gift of humour in which it had been so often confidently asserted the whole female sex was deficient, was seen to shine out in this individual with the warmest suffusion of light and insight. She put all theories to flight and extinguished all fallacies on that subject without a word said. No man, no critic, could condescend to her, or treat her with that courteous (or uncourteous) superiority which has been the ordinary lot of women ; no one indeed, so far as we know, ever attempted to do so—her position was established from the moment when she first found her natural utterance.

The way in which she did so was in itself highly interesting, though her story lies under a cloud, which it is unfortunately impossible to dissipate, and which throughout, makes her life much less desirable to dwell upon than her work or her fame. She was the daughter of a very modest, respectable, commonplace family in the country, and from her childhood had been brought up in the unlovely straitness of a narrow little religious community to whom it was apparent that they alone were secure of salvation, and all the world lay in wickedness. From this unfounded and conventional

(as far as she was concerned) faith she fell in a moment at the touch of the first assault, without difficulty and without regret, among people pretty much of the same mental attitude, though entirely contrary in point of belief, people still profoundly conscious that the whole world lay in folly, and that they alone were wise. The young and aspiring girl, thus transported, as appeared, to a height of intellectual illumination, detached herself from all the traditions as well as all the tenets of Christianity, and when in mature life she became the so-called wife of George Henry Lewes she was, no doubt, in her own eyes and according to the light of nature blameless, and only subject to a conventional censure to which she assumed, as well as she could, that she attached no importance. What was more extraordinary was that society after a while took her at her word, and instead of finding in her another example of the wickedness of genius, as was done in such cases as those of Byron and Shelley, condoned the offence which strikes at the root of all law, and relaxed its standards for the sake of that genius which was too great to be doubted. This result was as unlooked-for as it will remain, we hope, unparalleled and unique.

Whatever may be said in the point of view of morality nothing could have been better for literature than the union thus formed. George

Henry Lewes was not himself in any respect a man of genius, but he was one of the most typical of literary men, knowing everybody and known of everybody, not very successful as a writer, but a good critic, and thoroughly able to secure a hearing for a new writer, and to guide the steps of the neophyte in every way, both to fame and profit. It was he who suggested to the partner of his life that she should attempt fiction, and this at a moment when their fortunes were low, and when a new beginning one way or another was of the greatest importance to their joint comfort. Such reasons alas ! do not confer power : but they are good to stimulate it where it exists. Miss Evans up to this time had been a very mediocre writer in the *Westminster Review*, an essayist quite unremarkable, and a translator—though even her translations do not seem to have been worthy of any special notice ; and when she was left alone one morning undisturbed to make her first attempt at a story, herself deprecating the possibility of doing so, and only attempting it because it was so urged upon her, the situation is one which might easily have been rendered ridiculous, or painful in the telling, had the attempt ended, as seemed so likely, in some laborious nothing. One can understand something of the feelings of the excited man who had set this dutiful but cumbrous machinery to work, with high

hopes indeed, but no knowledge whether the result would be a mass of chopped hay, straw, and stubble, or some great work which the world would not willingly let die. He is neither a sympathetic nor a delightful character in himself, yet a certain excitement of feeling is generated within us, half against our will, as we think of his return, of the woman coming to meet him, pale with the day's seclusion and hard work, with the thrill of production about her, and the still stronger thrill of half-despairing alarm lest her critic should think nothing of it, putting the sheets of manuscript into his hand. What George Lewes read was a portion at least of the "Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton," a piece of work which in all her after-life George Eliot never surpassed. It was probably only the humorous *mise en scène*, the delightful picture of the village and the surrounding farms and their inhabitants, Mrs. Hackitt, and her neighbours, which he read in that tremendous moment, while the author stood by, not the least aware that her faltering essay was in fact, in its brevity and humility, as perfect a work of genius as was ever given to the world.

This first work, *Scenes of Clerical Life*, stole quietly into notice in *Blackwood's Magazine* without at first any flourish of trumpets. It consisted, as everybody knows, of three stories, by no means equal, *Mr. Gilfil's Love-story*, with its episode of

uncongenial and tragic romance, and the tale, almost too painful, of *Janet's Repentance* following that of *Amos Barton*. The first was however by far the finest of the three, and the wonder grows, as we read and re-read it, how this could be the very first chapter, the sudden outburst after empty and dull reviewing, essay-writing, etc., into sudden light and life. The little experiment of the story-writing meant fame, ease, fortune, and everything that the world could give to the pair who had spent a day of such anxiety over it; for there was not a moment's hesitation in the response of the public, which still carries that first story in its heart of hearts. *Janet's Repentance* was remarkable for the wonderful picture of another clergyman, the martyr of his own zeal and love for his Master and his people, the saviour of Janet—whose pure passion of religious faith and earnestness was half resented by some persons when they discovered that the author had conceived that shining figure coldly as a mere specimen, and not with any sympathy or faith in his faith. It seemed a kind of outrage upon nature that such an image should come from an imagination unmoved by its wonderful and celestial life—an outrage, yet all the more a miracle, as proving how genius can clothe in human form the inconceivable, though unable to touch with all its powers the true mystery of that incarnation.

Adam Bede, which was the author's second work (published 1859), enlarged, extended and consolidated her fame. The broader canvas gave fuller scope to her powers, and she had now learnt the use of her instrument and had gained assurance in her work. This wonderful transcript of humanity containing so much that is usually undiscovered in life, the movement of the heart and mind, the workings of motive, the extraordinary inadvertences and misconceptions of existence which mingle with its most common calculations, and balk its schemes and alter its course—was received as if it had been a revelation. Everything was in it, the world observed and the world divined : Mrs. Poyser on whom so many critics and readers alighted with unceasing delight, but who probably cost the writer less trouble than most of the others : the romantic religious ideal, sweet yet conventional, of Dinah, more dear to another class than anything that is absolutely true to nature : and the wonderful impersonation of Hetty, the shallow, selfish yet absolutely natural and genuine being, who secures none of the writer's sympathies yet is drawn by her with a supreme understanding which is almost awful in its knowledge. The men were weaker than the women, which is a natural result of the less intimate acquaintance with them than with her own sex, which almost in every case influences the female writer, as,

except in Shakespeare, it does with a corresponding disability the man ; yet Adam, Seth and the other tradesmen and farm folk are broadly drawn and answer to the necessities of the human balance, if they are not so conspicuous as their partners. The picture altogether was so much broader both in conception and execution than anything with which the public had been familiar for years, that the effect was very remarkable. It was as large as Sir Walter and almost as natural, while abounding with spiritual analysis and philosophy, which would neither have suited his mind nor that of his time—and much more so than either of the two other great novelists of her own day, whose interpretation of life was confined to a lesser area and distinctions more sharply drawn. Thackeray had Society for his subject with but glimpses into the surrounding world, and Dickens had the twists and oddities only of nature, but trod in general a highly conventionalised and unreal sphere, made, however, all the more whimsical from the incongruities of absolute fact with the wild vagaries of freakish wit and fancy. George Eliot on the other hand took the broad country as her sphere, limited too by the fact that she did not much know the gentry or their ways, and that therefore the picture was incomplete on that side ; but there are hundreds of people to portray the gentry ; and so

far as she knew it every step was solid, living and true.

The works of this great writer divide themselves naturally into sections: the first containing the *Scenes of Clerical Life*, the *Mill on the Floss*, *Adam Bede* and *Silas Marner*. This was her first method and it contained, we think, the best of her books, the unaffected, genuine and natural utterance of her genius. There is an intermediate stage in which she produced *Felix Holt*, to our mind by far the least valuable of her work, the poems, *Spanish Gipsy*, etc., which had a considerable fictitious importance at the moment because of the great hold which she had taken upon the public mind, but for which very few people now have a good word to say; and *Romola*, a book of high intention, of elaborate execution and of a sort of superlative merit, which is neither nature nor truth, but something due to the power of a masterful imagination imposing forcibly its great effort upon the world. Nothing can exceed in real power, however, the picture of the attractive villain Tito, so thoroughly base of nature, so tortuous—so lovable and beautiful on the outside, so amiable and so remorseless at once—which is drawn by the author with a concentrated passion as of some actual person whom she hated and pursued through every trick and wile, never leaving him till the last pang of

dishonoured and miserable death to which she drives him with a fierce joy in his last agonies :— while nothing could be less real, more like the glorified ideal of the school-girl, than the superlative Romola, so curiously unlike anything which could have been expected from a hand so strong and so sure. The sketch of Savonarola is equally wanting in all the qualities which we should have looked for from a writer who had created Tryon without having any sympathy with him, in sheer faithfulness to, and understanding of, the mysteries of human life.

This was perhaps the beginning of the new influence, the laborious elaboration of her later style, which has made *Middlemarch* and *Daniel Deronda* a class by themselves in fictitious literature. And yet the *mise en scène* of *Middlemarch*, the country landscape and the bustling old Squire, Mr. Brooke, are admirable and full of life and power : and the painful conception of Rosamond, evidently an incarnation of all that was most hateful to the author, and pursued like Tito with remorseless wrath to the end, is as strong as it is terrible :—while the story of Gwendoline in *Deronda*, up to the moment of her marriage, is one of the most masterly of impersonations. When, however, a female perfection comes in in the shape of Dorothea, and still more a male perfection in the form of Daniel Deronda, this admirable genius

fails and sinks into morasses of fictitious imagination, and laboured utterance. Her true inspiration had nothing to do with these artificial and fantastic embodiments of new philosophy and a conventional ideal. It has been generally believed that George Eliot was influenced by her surroundings, and by the strain of excessive applause seldom tempered by criticism, to these efforts to transcend herself. It is very likely that it was a most sincere attempt on her part to improve upon the greater simplicity of the earlier method, in which the natural humility of genius had some share, as well as the increasing profundity of metaphysical studies, and the narrowing out of all true contact of life from the curious society of worshippers which had gathered round her, and kept her closely encircled, apart from the free air and natural atmosphere to which she had been born.

This society was, while it lasted, one of the most curious features in the history of contemporary literature—a close circle where nothing was heard but adoration of the divine figure in the midst, where strangers were charily admitted to gaze with awe over the shoulders of the initiated, and await in reverence the possibility of a word: where never jarring sound was permitted, nor breath of criticism, nor even a suggestion that the standard of perfect excellence was not always there. This state of affairs was generally

believed to be the expedient of Mr. Lewes to keep in the finest condition and happiest circumstances the companion of his later life, whose genius he had discovered and fostered, and of whom he was always the first worshipper. The world perhaps has not done him sufficient credit for having made that great discovery and gently forced and led into utterance a power which had been between thirty and forty years in the world without discovering itself—but it has on the other hand remorselessly laid on his shoulders the obscuration of that genius, in the more laborious efforts of her latest style. It was reserved for a second husband, Mr. Cross, to present the world with a picture of the great novelist and humorist, in which George Eliot appears as a very dull woman, turgidly philosophical and drearily commonplace, as if she had never had an idea, much less a laugh, and least of all an inspiring and noble consciousness of human life and its interests and mysteries, in her. How this amazing overturn of every natural conception could be, is a question upon which, notwithstanding the endless criticism to which it has been subjected, no light has as yet been thrown.

Two robust and manly figures come into the scene after the great woman-novelist, contemporaries, earlier than she in their first dates, and associated together even more naturally than

Dickens and Thackeray, who have, indeed, no real connection except their greatness. Anthony Trollope (1815-82) and Charles Reade (1814-84), however, treated of the same society under the same conditions, and though very different in many ways, will always stand together in the front of the second rank of Victorian novelists which might well be the first rank of an age less exceptionally gifted. Anthony Trollope will satisfy the believers in heredity from the circumstance that he was the son of his mother, a writer whose broadly humorous and perhaps vulgar, but always vigorous pictures of English contemporary life, as well as criticisms of other countries, had made for her a very distinct and wide-spread reputation, and whose pathetic and touching story, so unlike anything that was known or could have been imagined of the author of *Widow Barnaby*, has only been made known very lately in the autobiographical works of her two sons. Anthony, the younger of these, but the first to make himself known to the world, had a childhood and youth much troubled by perpetual change, and entered upon life with few advantages, having obtained the position of a clerk in the Post Office at an early age. He himself gives a very dreary picture of this preface of life of a young man alone in London, without friends or any elevating pursuit to raise him above the routine of a dull

and lonely existence. By good fortune, however, he was transferred from that dreary beginning to a more energetic and independent life in Ireland, where he first began to put his impressions of life into fiction, with very poor success for a number of years. The beginner may find encouragement in the record of his failures to catch the public ear; though that encouragement may be tempered by warning, since we doubt whether these early efforts were worth very much more than the failure they met with, though in the light of his subsequent eminence, they have been found readable and worthy of a better fate. It was not until 1853 that the publication of the *Warden* established him at once in the position which he kept more or less till the end of his life. We do not think that in any of his after works Mr. Trollope ever surpassed this story, or even produced anything so perfect in its subdued tones as the picture of the elderly and humble-minded clergyman, so true, so simple and so mild, yet invulnerable in gentle resolution when his conscience had been awakened, and he had perceived his position to be untenable according to his own high yet completely unostentatious standard of right and wrong. Mr. Harding may take his place among the best and most delicately drawn of those new men and women who have been added to our spiritual acquaintance (and their name is legion)

during this age, so wealthy in fiction. He does not come up to the high standard of Colonel Newcome or Esmond, but he is in his way as real, and even more unconsciously and gently noble-minded than they. His mild and happy life as warden of the picturesque old hospital, doing good to everybody round him, sinking into the gentle languor of age among the old men whom he cherishes and loves, with his fiddle, by which he breathes forth his troubles and despondencies when they arise, his well-married ambitious daughter, and his pretty young one, the solace of his life; and the rising cloud that comes over him, his conflicts within and without, against the renunciation which all his friends think so foolish, and the sudden strength of unalterable conviction which gives the mild old man strength to stand against them all—are so admirably done that we are made to share at once in the soft determination which is beyond all argument, and the exasperated incapacity of everybody around to perceive any reason why he should take the step which he feels so incumbent on him. The little sunny cathedral town, the gently drowsy atmosphere, into which as yet no bustling new life has come, the old bishop and his old clergy going down the quiet path together, is perfectly rendered: and Barchester entered at once and permanently into the record of English Sees, from the day

when this little book, one volume and no more, was given to the world.

It was, however, more than the warden, it was a little world of well-known figures that came into view along with Mr. Harding. Everybody concluded, not knowing Mr. Trollope as yet, that he was at least the son of a canon or other ecclesiastical dignitary steeped in the life of the Close, and drawing, if not individual sketches, yet pictures from a memory filled with long processions of Deans, Archdeacons, and other clerical folk. It remains one of the wonders, of which there are so many in literature, how a young man, struggling into life, whose antecedents had been anything but those of a Cathedral, the son of an almost nomad family, and with little that was beautiful in his life and circumstances, should have been the one to introduce that serene yet sorely-tried old man, with all those towers and cloisters behind him, and the characteristic atmosphere and tone of so strongly-marked a community to the acquaintance of the world. But these contrasts and paradoxes are of continual occurrence in the works of real genius. From this beginning rose a series of books which, in their day, interested all readers as much, or nearly as much, as Thackeray or Dickens. Perhaps none of all the characters created by these masters entered into the general life and conversation more than

Mrs. Proudie, the wife of the new Bishop of Barchester, whose sway over him and the diocese was so real a thing both to Barchester and to England, and over whom, when she suddenly and unaccountably died in the height of her activity and fame, the whole country raised a wail of regret and remonstrance to earth and heaven. It is very rarely that a novelist produces such an effect as this. It was, indeed, more real and loud than our grief over the beautiful and touching tragedy of Colonel Newcome—for there seemed still a prospect of endless amusement in Mrs. Proudie, and no reason in the world why she should die. Her absolute reality and firm standing upon the common soil, a woman whom we all knew, perhaps had something to do with this triumph over the higher imagination.

We cannot pause upon the Archdeacon, whose creation is as distinct and masterly, nor his wife, nor the many other members of that most characteristic community, which extends into life on every side, even reaching so far as the Duke of Omnium, and that remarkable young politician and statesman, his heir, Mr. Plantagenet Palliser. The last *Chronicle of Barset* added a stronger note of tragedy to the varied story which began with Mr. Harding, in the person of another clergyman, Mr. Crawley, the poor, proud, learned parson with his overflowing family, and the false accusation

which hung over him for so long. Posterity, to which we all appeal, will find nowhere any better illustration of the Victorian age, than in this series of admirable fiction, if it does not lose its way among the intolerable number of books which put forward a somewhat similar claim. Mr. Trollope wrote a great many more novels. He wrote, indeed, a great deal too many for his own reputation, not only because of the fact that in so much there could not but be considerable inequality, but also because the voluminous writer is always less likely to secure a favourable judgment than he, more reticent, or of slower productive power, whose claim is more easily investigated, and the best he can do or has done more clearly identified. He added to this effect in his own person by a cheerful vaunting of his mode of work, and humorous exaggeration of the just so many words a day which he bound himself to write. He has been thence represented as a man working by the most prosaic methods at a mere trade of novel-writing, an exceedingly false as well as highly injurious representation. The man who could write the *Chronicles of Barchester* may well be content to rest upon these admirable works his claim to enduring fame.

It is more difficult to define the charm and humorous mastery with which Charles Reade contributed his share to the elucidation of English

popular life. He took no individual class of people in hand, chose no local centre, placed no Barchester in the geography of the country. He found his material anywhere, in the village, in the country town, in London, at sea, with a knowledge and acquaintance with all, which was always broad and full of light wherever he chose to place his centre, and with an indifference to time as well as place, which was a high test of his wonderful power. For though he was essentially a writer of the nineteenth century, and his books a record of the manners and morals of his day, yet his greatest work is a historical romance of the fifteenth century, and one of the most powerful of his lesser productions, *Griffith Gaunt*, contains an admirable and living picture of English life a hundred years ago, no book of costumes as so many are, but a most animated transcript of a time which is entirely past. This work is not to be compared with *Esmond* as a work of art, but it has a strength and swiftness and power of rapid realisation which is as remarkable in its way. It is, however, what is called a disagreeable book, and therefore has never had the popularity it deserves. The *Cloister and the Hearth* (published in 1861), Mr. Reade's longest and greatest work, can scarcely be spoken of with praise too high. It is like one of those mediæval pictures in which we see in a succession of scenes—which occupy

what in a more artificial piece would be simply background—the whole life and progress of the man whose picture, whether a portrait or a leading incident in his life, is the chief subject. The wonderful romance of Gerard and his companion, with its hundred episodes which are not archaic and bear no mark of the midnight oil, but fresh as the breath of the primitive country with all its fierce little walled towns and noble castles and hospitable convents, rolls out before us in endless detail, without ever withdrawing our attention from the noble young figure, all ardour, purity, and faith, which is the chief interest. The *Cloister and the Hearth* is one of the books which we should put into our list for the furnishing and endowment of that desert island for which we are so often asked to choose an imaginary library.

It is, however, Reade's novels of modern and contemporary life which are his most numerous productions, and these had, not only in most cases a special purpose, but a curiously particular method. It was his habit to accumulate from the newspapers and from every quarter where such details could be procured, the facts and incidents of daily life, and especially of all abuses in public and private matters, wrongs done, or rights neglected, which he preserved in immense volumes, indexed and labelled, so that he should be able in a moment to lay his hand on any detail he wanted

either of individual misadventure, or of the mistakes of public institutions and the tyrannies of private life. Surrounded by that extraordinary reference library this strange man sat and worked, fondly believing that it was from his multitudinous volumes of shreds and patches, and not from his own genius that he called forth those living and moving tales, in which the gloomy life of the prison, the still more dreadful existence of the madhouse, the outrages of the early trade-unions, were placed before our eyes, and unaware that all these extraordinary collections were but so much rubbish, as soon as the great spirit which took the trouble to use them was gone. Mr. Reade was not without his share of vanity, but he was far more proud of these masses of information which he had collected, than of the genius which was capable of making even such dry bones live.

One of his most delightful books is the story called *Love me Little, Love me Long*, a somewhat absurd title, in which the history and adventures of the Dodd family, afterwards continued in *Hard Cash*, are introduced to the reader. The simple and noble sailor David Dodd is one of the finest pictures in contemporary fiction, and we know no single scene more exciting than the night at sea in which a little pleasure boat is driven from the English to the French coast, and the hapless passengers are saved by the presence

of this sea-captain, who at once becomes the master of the situation, and by the unsuspected pluck and gallantry of Lucy, the slightly artificial young lady for whom up to this moment he had seemed much too good. The reader will perhaps, however, recall more easily the exciting scenes in the prison, and those in Australia which make *Never too late to Mend* one of the most striking novels of breathless movement and adventure, as it was one of the most popular of its day. Its construction, especially at that trying moment when the exigencies of the story and the necessity of a good ending—which was then more incumbent upon the writer than now—demanded a *tour de force* to satisfy everybody, is exceedingly faulty ; but the chief scenes, to all boys and wholesome-minded persons who love a story, can never lose their exciting power. *Peg Woffington*, an admirable study, afterwards developed with the collaboration of Mr. Tom Taylor into the play called *Masks and Faces* which still holds the stage, and *Christie Johnston*, a delightful picture of the salt-water population of Newhaven in Scotland, are also excellent specimens of a vivid power and mastery of his subject in which Charles Reade was remarkable among his contemporaries, conveying to the critic the impression, always an interesting and imposing one, that his performance, however excellent, never reached the full measure

of what he could have done. His life had throughout an academic background, though it is difficult to imagine this in reading his works. Born in 1814, he was first a Demy, and then a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, which latter pleasant position he held till his death in 1884, a period of more than thirty years. Surely no better use of such an endowment could be than in thus affording an *appui* to such a man of letters, a high grace and honour to his venerable college: but that fortunate combination of circumstance is we believe possible no more.

Another member of much the same circle, although specially attached to the group which surrounded Dickens, William Wilkie Collins (1824-89), had also a high standing among the novelists of his day. He was the son of William Collins, R.A., the painter and Royal Academician, and was accordingly familiar from his earliest life with those modest circles of art and literature in London which in those days made, far more than now, a little world for themselves. The special power of Mr. Wilkie Collins as afterwards developed was for the construction of plots, and the use of all the most elaborate machinery of the story. His was the art which keeps the reader breathless, not through a scene or act of adventure, but during the long and elaborate following out of intrigue and incident, those tangles of the web of

fate, or intricate combinations of circumstance, conducting certainly to an often unsuspected end—which never lose their effect so long as they are skilfully and powerfully done, as was the case in the earlier works of this novelist. He did not possess the still more interesting and far higher gift of creation. There is no character, no living being in his works, with the exception perhaps of Count Fosco—of whom the reader will probably at this distance remember even the name; but notwithstanding this his power of holding his audience spellbound and of rousing the same kind of curiosity and eager interest with which we watch day by day the gradual unfolding of the links of evidence in a great trial, was unsurpassed, we might say unequalled, in his day. The sensation produced by the *Woman in White*, the first and consequently most striking of the series of stories in which he has displayed this power, and which came out in serial form in *Household Words*, thus doubling the excitement of those who had to wait from week to week for a fresh instalment of the story, was prodigious. It was the subject of conversation and speculation everywhere, and the reader followed every trace and commented upon every incident, as if some personal interest of his own hung upon the identification of the gentle witless creature who was the shadow heroine, and the unhappy lady who was the real

object of all those highly-wrought and intricate snares. Fosco, the Italian adventurer, the delightful, amiable, seductive, *fat* villain—a quite new point in the record of crime—with his plausible exterior and his remorseless purpose, was, as has been said, the sole successful attempt of Mr. Wilkie Collins to create a man. The others were puppets of his admirably-constructed theatre, made to be pushed about here and there and to express terror and innocence and villainy and those states of partial apprehension, those mistakes and fictitious blunders which arrest the progress of a tale and increase its difficulties ; but they were, and pretended to be no more. To be led along those often alarming, always cleverly contrived mazes, and to trace the thread of story in and out, was the entertainment he offered to his public. Nothing excites a more lively or keen interest, but unfortunately nothing palls more upon the excited imagination, and it cannot be said that Mr. Collins retained the spell which he had worked so forcibly in the beginning of his career. He continued to produce similar persecutions of the innocent, and long-laid trains of villainy involving all kinds of agents, who in most cases told each their story neatly, though in a style too much resembling each other and the author, till nearly the conclusion of his career—and always found a sufficient audience, but never we think succeeded in securing the breathless

interest of the reader as he did with the *Woman in White*.

This book, though the first exercise of his special gift, was not his first work. He had written before a novel called *Antonina*, the scene of which was laid in Rome, and the conclusion a horrible tragedy ; and also *Basil*, a more ordinary tale, which more or less convinced the critics of his power to do something, but did not attract the notice of the public. He was largely connected with Dickens during his life, working with him, acting with him, and receiving and giving continual sympathy both in work and the incidents of life. The *Woman in White*, as has been said, appeared in Dickens's weekly magazine, *Household Words*, and helped to make the fortune of that paper as well as his own. Mr. Wilkie Collins died in 1889.

We may here mention Charles Collins (1828-73), a brother of Wilkie Collins, who wrote several works not very successful and died young ; and a much more important person, Thomas Adolphus Trollope, who has written much and well, chiefly on Italian life, and who still lives, having contributed to recent literature two volumes of autobiographical sketches, full of interest and a fine humanity.

In this group of the novelists of the Victorian age who have already passed from the scene, may be here placed one of the best-known

and most highly esteemed of the woman-writers, of whom there have been so many, Dinah Maria Muloch (1826-87), afterwards Mrs. Craik. She began her work at a very early age, having had family responsibilities laid upon her young shoulders of a very unusual and heavy kind. Her first novel the *Ogilvies* was published in 1849 when she was little more than twenty-two, and was followed in the next year by *Olive*, works which showed a pure and elevated purpose with something of the over-sentiment of youth, and that sadness in which the poetical imagination so generally takes refuge at the age when everything external is naturally most bright. She did not, however, assume her true place in fiction until the publication of *John Halifax, Gentleman*, a work which attained instant and great popularity, and which has had many imitators, the sincerest flattery, according to the proverb, which can be bestowed. This work, which relates the history of a good man's life and love, has but little incident, and no meretricious attractions, but attained the higher triumph of securing the public attention and sympathy by its pure and elevated feeling, fine perception of character, and subdued but admirable literary power. Miss Muloch thus placed herself at the head of one division of the army of novelists. She has also added attraction to more than one landscape, throwing an interest to many readers

over the little town of Tewkesbury, for instance, with which the scene of *John Halifax* was identified, which has brought many pilgrims, we believe, to that place, not only from other parts of England but from the great continent across the seas where fiction has even more importance and its scenes more interest than among ourselves. A considerable succession of novels followed *John Halifax*, among which may be mentioned *Agatha's Husband*, the *Head of the Family*, *A Noble Life*, and many others.

Mrs. Craik (married 1864 to Mr. George Lillie Craik, one of the senior members of the firm of Macmillan and Co., the eminent publishers) also published a few volumes of essays on general subjects. She died in 1887.

The names of Geraldine Jewsbury (1812-80) and Julia Kavanagh (1824-77) may also be mentioned here, though neither of them has attained anything like the eminence of Mrs. Craik. Miss Jewsbury wrote two or three novels of the rebellious-sentimental kind, her heroines contending against such contrarieties of fate as that women should have to endure the pains and troubles of maternity. She is chiefly known by her long association and friendship with Thomas Carlyle and his wife. Miss Kavanagh was a much more voluminous writer. She was herself an Irish-woman, but had spent most of her life on the

Continent, and her scenes and subjects are chiefly drawn from French country life. Mrs. Henry Wood (1820-87) is another of the novelists of that generation who have passed away from the scene of their labours. All that it seems necessary to say of her is what is said in all the advertisements. Her works sell by the fifty thousands, and it is the boast of her publishers that they have issued more than a million copies. Critics have little to say where the public has made such a sweeping demonstration of its appreciation and applause.

Among the other novelists who have completed their work we may here add the names of Major John George Whyte-Melville (1821-78), whose bold and stirring romances chiefly connected with the hunting-field have had a great reputation in their time; and Mr. James Grant, a writer who has given us many lively pictures of soldiering and military life. Still more distinguished in his day—the originator of a school of novel-writers and a special type of dashing hero—was George Alfred Lawrence (1827-76), better known as the author of *Guy Livingstone*. Colonel Lawrence Lockhart (1832-82), a nephew of John Gibson Lockhart, was the author of two or three animated and amusing stories of love and sport, or rather of sport and love. Of a very different order, and holding his audience with a

stronger grasp, was J. Sheridan Le Fanu, the grandson of a sister of the great Sheridan, and possessing much of the literary gift of the family. His stories are full of powerful sensationalism, and his subjects partly supernatural. Mr. F. Fergus (1847-85), writing under the name of "Hugh Conway," made one of the great reputations of a day, of which there have been several in this generation, with a novel of the title of *Called Back*, a book by no means wanting in interest or cleverness, but quite inadequate to account for the effect produced.

We may add to this list several names of ladies, among which are some omitted in their proper place, those of Mary Russell Mitford (1786-1855) and Anna Maria Hall (1802-81). Miss Mitford's name will recall to the elder reader many a delightful study of country life. *Our Village*, a long series of sketches which appeared at various dates between 1824 and 1832, and gained for her the best kind of popularity, that of cordial and genial sympathy from all who loved country scenes, and the wholesome if not very exciting annals of a well-to-do rustic community. She was also the author of several historical plays, highly considered in their time, and of a delightful book of reminiscence and quotation called *Recollections of a Literary Life*, which unites the charm of a *Golden Treasury* to that of a lively

autobiography. Mrs. S. C. Hall was chiefly known for her stories of Irish life and character, and for her somewhat laborious but not unsuccessful career as one of the hostesses of literary society — the mistress of a *salon* where many well-known people assembled. Mrs. Alfred Gatty (1809-73) was well known for her stories for children published under the *nom de plume* of Aunt Judy, under which character she conducted for seven years a magazine for children which was much esteemed. Her greatest production, however, was her daughter Juliana, afterwards Mrs. Ewing, whose exquisite stories, *Jackanapes*, etc. etc., though originally intended for children, have touched the heart and gained the deep admiration of many elder readers—but who died early in the fulness of her sweet and sympathetic genius.

These have all ended their career, and can no longer alter the verdict or change the opinion pronounced upon them. One other honoured name of a quite peculiar fame we may also record here, that of Giovanni, or, as he preferred to call himself, John Ruffini (1807-81), an Italian who took refuge in this country after the troubles of the '48, and who, though he never fully mastered our language in spoken speech, wrote his novels, of which there are five or six—the first and best being *Dr. Antonio* — in admirable

English, presenting the strange phenomenon of a fervid and patriotic Italian taking his subjects from his own country, but making use of the language of his hosts and friends in which to embody them. *Dr. Antonio* is a favourite book in Italy, and its hero is an Italian who seals his devotion to his country with his blood : but before it can be read in that country, which its chief object is to honour and magnify, it has to be translated out of English, a most curious fact, and so far as we know unique in literary history. Another writer still more distinct though in a very different way, is Laurence Oliphant, a name well known in other branches of literature, who is also the author of one brilliant piece of social satire in the shape of a novel, *Piccadilly*, perhaps the most trenchant and effective assault which has been made upon the falsehoods and fictions of Society in our time ; and of several others in which the interest is less direct and personal, *Altiora Peto*, *Masollam*, etc., all sparkling with wit and the most powerful criticism of life, though with a mixture of exalted mysticism which has repelled as many minds as it has attracted. His own life, as is well known, was full of the most extraordinary struggle between the force of that mysticism and the sense and reason of an accomplished man of the world.

The band which remains of what we may call

the morning time of the Victorian age is naturally now few in number, and a writer, who herself is a member of it, finds some difficulty in entering fully into a critical notice of her contemporaries, in which her own place can only be indicated. Mr. George Meredith, whose praise is in all the circles of the critics, and some of whose works are already classics, has never condescended to those humble gifts of distinctness and plain story telling which find a novelist access to the crowd. Were his books subjected to a process of compression, and his sentences unwound from the extraordinary convolution of words in which he shows an increasing inclination to wrap up his meaning, the ordinary public would be in a better condition to understand and appreciate the high qualities with which the leaders of literary opinion have always accredited this remarkable writer. This defect is by no means so great, however, in his earlier romances—in the *Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, for example, which is full of beautiful and powerful scenes—than in his later work. Mr. George Macdonald is also a novelist who has missed the very widest circle of readers, rather from the visionary beauty of his characters and the quite unworldly strain of his writing and too lofty theory of life, than from any want, either of truth or strength in his work, especially the earlier part of it. His *David Elginbrod*, the first

of his novels, brought out, from the very lowest level of Scottish country folk, a father and daughter who were worthy to be ranked with the saints and poets, and whose beautiful apprehension of everything fine and great startled the reader, accustomed indeed to find much peasant wit and wisdom in these favourite subjects of Scotch novels, but not a strain so lofty as this. Throughout his works the same peculiarity—a strain too elevated, and a visionary character almost too beautiful, which made the poor little Sir Gibbie of the garret, and the gillie Malcolm, at once fit for the highest positions, and higher than these positions whatever they might be—has made him miss a little that necessary foundation upon the commoner understanding and emotions which is necessary to a writer of popular fiction. Mr. R. D. Blackmore has not shared this fault. His peasant folk of the West of England are more racy of the soil than any other such population we know, and though they all possess a general wealth of quaint eloquence which perhaps too much resembles their author's natural turn of speech, and represents his ideas rather than theirs, are in other respects not above the average of men and women. His greatest success, however, was gained by the semi-historical work of *Lorna Doone*, which has made a Devonshire valley classic ground, and brought an

obscure historical episode into fuller light than usually falls upon much more important events. His people are so fully alive, and so recognisable as actual persons not unlike their sons and grandsons, that the fame of this book has gone both high and low, to the simplest reader as well as the severest critic. We may add to this list—though his one remarkable book can scarcely be called a novel—the name of Mr. Thomas Hughes, now Judge Hughes, whose *Tom Brown* first awakened that interest of the general public in public schools which has never flagged since then, and made the remarkable reign of Dr. Arnold at Rugby, and his ideal of the English schoolboy, better known than the more legitimate medium of biography and descriptive history could ever have made them. *Tom Brown at Oxford* was not equally successful, but the introduction of the ideal young man of Victorian romance, the fine athlete, moderately good scholar, and honest, frank, muscular and humble-minded gentleman of whom we have seen so many specimens, is due to Judge Hughes more than to any other. If circumstances have occurred since to make us a little tired of that good fellow, and disposed to think his patronage of the poorer classes somewhat artificial, it is not Judge Hughes's fault.

The ladies belonging to the same band are—Miss Yonge, whose series of novels has added

quite a new world of excellent church people, good, noble, and true, with all their fads and little foolishnesses, all their habits of mind and speech, their delightful family affection, and human varieties of goodness, to an inferior universe, in which with all its faults there are so many such, that a sympathetic and interested audience can never be wanting. Her first work, the *Heir of Redclyffe*, with its sweet youthful tragedy of piety and devotion, took the heart of the country by storm, and placed the author in a position which, through, we had almost said hundreds of narratives of a similar character, she has never lost. Miss Braddon, of a very different character and aim, was the first inventor of that gentle and amiable heroine, fair-haired, blue-eyed, and capable of every crime, who has been so often repeated since, and added a new specialité of character for the use of those lesser artists who follow a leader with such exasperating fidelity to all that can be copied. Miss Braddon, now Mrs. Maxwell, is perhaps the most complete storyteller of the whole, and has not confined herself to that or any other type of character, but has ranged widely over all English scenes and subjects, always with a power of interesting and occupying the public, which is one of the first qualities of the novelist. If it has ever happened to the reader to find himself while travelling, out

of the reach of books and left to the drift of cheap editions for the entertainment of his stray hours, he will then appreciate what it is among the levity and insignificance of many of the younger writers to find the name of Miss Braddon on a title-page, and to know that he is likely to find some sense of life as a whole, and some reflection of the honest sentiments of humanity amid the froth of flirtation and folly which has lately invaded like a destroying flood the realms of fiction. Mrs. Lynn Linton is of the rebellious school to which we have already referred, and prone to see nothing but problems and difficulties in life, whether in the case of the unappreciated daughter or wife, or in other and more complicated religious or social matters. Conflicts of both kinds are apt to form the groundwork of her novels. One of these, however, *Joshua Davidson*, which aroused a good deal of interest in its time, is occupied with an attempt to represent the life of Jesus Christ under modern conditions—an attempt which must always strike the general reader as somewhat profane as well as singularly futile. It is still more difficult for the present writer to characterise the works of Miss de la Ramée, commonly known as Ouida. A great deal of extravagance, and a curious preference for the unsavoury as well as the high-flown, have done much to conceal from the reader the gifts of picturesque description and what is

called word-painting which this lady undoubtedly possesses. It is a dangerous gift, and has led in many cases to a riot of highly-coloured words, in which imagination runs wild, and the sober mind is incapable of following—while it is almost impossible to tell what are her powers of drawing character, because her personages are chiefly of one character, and that a very conventional type. Notwithstanding this she has achieved a great popularity, but is more acceptable to the public of a certain class than to critics of any kind. We can do no more than mention, in addition to these, the name of Mrs. Oliphant, for reasons which the reader will easily understand. It would be false modesty to leave it out of a record of the novelists of the Victorian age.

We may add in a sort of parenthesis, as what may be called an occasional novelist, Edward Jenkins, the author of the strange but very clever book called *Ginx's Baby*, which made a great impression upon the public mind at the time of its publication, though the author's occupation in life is not with literature, and this very effective piece of work had no fit successor.

It would be impossible to place a better or a more honourable name at the head of the next and younger school of writers still illustrating our time, and from whom we hope much more is still to be had, than that of Anne Thackeray,

now Mrs. Richmond Ritchie, the daughter of one of the greatest writers commemorated in these pages, and herself a novelist of the purest inspiration and the most gentle genius. The great gift of Thackeray has suffered a sea-change in a voice which knows few satirical tones, and in which the love of love is more conspicuous than the scorn of scorn. That her father also possessed this love of love and of all human nobleness in the most touching perfection it is not necessary to say. Miss Thackeray's *Story of Elizabeth*, published anonymously, secured entirely on its own merits a delighted reception from the public, which was soon enhanced by that feeling of affection which the reader soon learns to entertain for a writer so full of every lovable quality. Miss Thackeray, whose chief works have been published under that name, adds to her knowledge of English life an acquaintance with French habits and scenery, of which the *Village on the Cliff* is one of the most delightful examples.

Two ladies, though of considerably later date, may be placed here. Mrs. Humphry Ward (born Arnold, a granddaughter of Dr. Arnold) has had one of the most remarkable of literary successes in recent years. Her novel *Robert Elsmere* took the world by storm, and achieved a triumphant reputation, for which the wondering critic has attempted in vain to account. *David Grieve*, a

later production, has, we believe, pleased the critic in general better, but the world less, and the author's reputation as an author still hangs in the balance. This has not been the case with Miss Lawless (the Hon. Emily), whose wonderful narratives of Irish peasant life, *Hurriah* and *Grania*, have not been equalled by anything in contemporary literature, nor indeed in the past; for neither Miss Edgeworth nor any other Irish writer has possessed the wonderful poetic instinct with which this lady has penetrated to the very springs of a primitive life so characteristic and perhaps unique in national variety.

Mr. William Black, who has filled the islands and rocks of the Western Highlands with many new friends and acquaintances since the time when the *Princess of Thule* came among us with all the glory of the sunsets about her, and who has made that beautiful but stormy region his own—not to speak of the milder landscape which he embodied in a *Daughter of Heth*, and the abundant sketches of English scenery, as well as the men and women of all nations whom he has added to our acquaintance: and the shoals of salmon glittering in silver and gold, in whom he has compelled us to take a sometimes excited interest; Mr. Walter Besant, the master of London in all its quaint nooks, as well as in the wastes of ugly little streets and rabbit-warrens of the very

poorest and most miserable life, where he has shown us so many human souls in agony, and so many tender hearts at work to help them—mingling a thread of romance, always bright and fresh, if sometimes difficult to realise as running through these sombre and dismal scenes, with every exposition of contemporary existence ; Mr. Thomas Hardy, who has made of the Dorsetshire peasant one of the most well-known characters in fiction, and filled the woods and the moors of that western country with quaint personages full of primitive wisdom and foolishness, almost too original and racy to be believed in as generally possible anywhere, yet also full of local character and colour, specially apparent in his first great novel, *Far from the Madding Crowd*, and in such following works as the *Mayor of Casterbridge* and the *Return of the Native* ;¹ Mr. James Payn, to whom we can assign no special locality or country, but who is ready for all, from the most everyday levels of English character and scenery, to the singularly powerful sketch of Chinese landscapes and ways in his novel, *By Proxy*, and whose multitudes of characters—though he never ignores the tragic lines that always traverse human chances and good fortunes—are flooded with a sunny light of

¹ These lines were written before the publication of what has proved Mr. Hardy's most remarkable work, the singular, powerful, and painful novel *Tess*.

good humour and good spirits, which is always genial and exhilarating ;—form a group of which any literature might be proud, and whose names, still appearing every year in the list of new books, are the chief entertainment and hope of that very extensive portion of the public which derives one of its most constant and abiding pleasures from fiction. We may add with pride and gratitude that these entirely manly writers, troubled by no feminine qualms as to propriety, have very rarely found it necessary to resort to those unwholesome mysteries of vice and so-called passion in which the novelists of France have lost themselves as in an enchanted labyrinth. The larger atmosphere of human life, with all its tragedies and problems, has sufficed and nobly occupied them—the great and broad and ever-varied world which was enough for Shakespeare, and happily remains so always for English art. The only exception to be made is perhaps in the case of Mr. Hardy, who latterly has chosen to add his able voice to the foolish ones who clamour against the purer rule, and who in his last work has boldly set up the sacrifice of what our fathers called female virtue, as a proof of purity : perhaps a piquant but certainly a very hopeless endeavour.

We may mention in the same connection Mr. Hamilton Aidé, whose pleasant novels deal chiefly with subjects in “Society” ; and Mr. W. E. Norris,

one of the most important members of the younger school, who has chosen the same *milieu*, and whose art and wit and often epigrammatic style are worthy of the highest commendation. Mrs. Riddell, who is as familiar with London, its out-of-the-way corners, and old-world fastnesses, as Mr. Besant, and better acquainted with the stock-brokers, merchants, and clerks who frequent them, and Madame Tautphœus, who has brought the pleasant variety of foreign manners of the most primitive and attractive kind into our English ordinary of fiction, and whose novels of the *Initials* and *Quits*, both exhibiting English heroes and heroines in the midst of the strange but delightful accessories of German and Tyrolese life, gained the warmest applause and interest of the British reader—are a little previous in date to some of the names mentioned before them; as are also Mr. Justin M'Carthy, whose pictures of the young Donna Quixotes and philanthropists of the time, the maiden queens and reformers of society, were so truthful and amusing; and Mr. Edmund Yates, who deals rather with the darker sides of life, the *Black Sheep* of society.

A younger and more powerful writer, Miss Rhoda Broughton, deserves a fuller mention. Her novels, with that rashness which sometimes characterises women of genius, impatient of the supposed trammels of the conventional, were apt at first to

play overmuch with those questions of "Passion" (as if there was but one passion in the world!) which are in reality more conventional than any other, and less open to the varieties of nature: and were full of love-scenes too warm, and an exclusive preoccupation with that juxtaposition of the young man and woman, which is always the most abiding single interest of any in fiction, but loses half of its charm by being separated from the full background of life. It is probably this special absorption in the one subject which seems to the French mind the beginning and ending of romance, that has procured her the high applause of the French critic, who authoritatively declares that since George Eliot no one has taken the highest place in fiction in England except this lady. But there can be no doubt that she is one of the most vigorous and masterful of the younger generation, and that her works have that superlative gift of "go" in them which is always a delightful quality as well as the most popular which the novelist can possess. Mrs. Walford, whose power over both the tragical and comical elements of ordinary English life were strikingly shown in her first novel, *Mr. Smith*, which has since been followed by many excellent stories, holds a distinct place of her own. But Miss Broughton has many followers, such as Miss Mathers, Mrs. Hungerford, and a long list of others, who are still making

their way into the ranks of literature, and of whom, accordingly, as any day may increase or diminish their place, it is unnecessary to speak here. Neither need we do more than name John Strange Winter (Mrs. Stannard), for whom there is this sole great thing to be said, that she has attained the high admiration and applause of Mr. Ruskin—which is something worth living for, if perhaps scarcely a satisfactory guidance in literature for the rest of the world. Another novelist who might be classed with Mr. Blackmore and Mr. Hardy as an exponent of English rural or peasant life is Mr. Baring Gould, whose efforts are more violent, and his art less refined, but who is often a very striking writer. Mr. Rider Haggard, whose extraordinary tales of adventure raised him to a giddy height of equally extraordinary popularity which has not been quite maintained, but who possesses the gift of the story-teller in a remarkable degree, must find a considerable place in every list of contemporary writers. In a very different way the once philosophical satirist, now sentimental and erratic romancer, Mr. W. H. Mallock, must also be named; as perhaps should also be Mr. George Moore, whose inspiration is entirely French, and whose reputation is chiefly based upon his choice of unsavoury subjects.

It is impossible, however, to close this record

in which no doubt many names are unavoidably overlooked, without giving special mention to a few whose achievements and hopes far surmount any usual level. It is difficult to place Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson in a distinct class. He is scarcely a novelist, though he has written one or two of the most remarkable tales in the language, but his power thus evidenced is enough at least to justify us in placing him here. After many very fine contributions to Victorian literature, in that form of writing which for want of a better title we call essays, he took the world by storm in 1883 with *Treasure Island*, a story of wild and thrilling adventure. In the nine years that have passed since he has made himself, with the apparent carelessness of power, several reputations, in addition to that of a master of style and language with which he had begun. His extraordinary sketch of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* excited the public more than perhaps any publication, so brief and with so little attraction of subject ever did—and almost the highest honours of literature may be awarded to the *Master of Ballantrae* and *Kidnapped*, his chief productions since. Several intervening publications do not reach that high level, without, however, painfully derogating from it. But in the pursuit perhaps of universal success, Mr. Stevenson has not hesitated to do even this, and several books which

we will not particularise have been published under his name, which are nearly as bad as anything which has been recently produced in print. With this marvellous range of capacity it is impossible to predict or even to attempt a prognostic of the direction which his next effort may take. In the meantime he remains one of the most remarkable, as he is certainly one of the most popular, writers of his day. Mr. F. Anstey, though he has neither the grace of style nor the genius of Mr. Stevenson, produced something like the sensation caused by the publication of *Treasure Island* (as did Mr. Haggard with *King Solomon's Mines*) with his first story *Vice Versâ*, a ludicrous narrative of the transformation of a middle-aged and exceedingly commonplace English bourgeois, into the person of his small son at school, and *vice versâ*—which did the British public the good service of betraying it into a roar of laughter, probably never surpassed. His works since have been more serious and not so successful, but he keeps up, chiefly in the pages of *Punch*, a running succession of chapters on common life, in which the fun is better, and the farce less broad, than in his first work. A writer still more remarkable for his humour and universal popularity, who ought to have been named before, is Mr. L. Dodgson (Lewis Carroll), whose *Alice in Wonderland* has been, ever since its appearance, the delight

of the English-speaking world. To say so much as this of a little book professedly written for a child, and addressed to children, forestalls anything more that could be added. The delightful and unmingled extravagance, the fun, the vivacity, and the wit, the pure spontaneousness and nature are beyond all praise. Into that world of puzzlement we all young and old delight to enter, and scarcely even Shakespeare is more "full of quotations" or allusions which we all take up with perfect understanding and familiarity. Such a success is even less rarely attained than the highest poetical effects of genius. Mr. Dodgson has published several other works of the same kind, but none which has secured any such hold upon the imagination and affection of the public.

We must add as the last, two names of young men, probably the very youngest of all living competitors for literary fame, who have made so remarkable a beginning, and possess such unquestionable genius, that we take leave of our subject with them, in all the brightness and satisfaction of a noble prospect, as well as an already admirable record. They do not in the smallest degree resemble each other except in the plenitude of youthful power.

J. M. Barrie, the author of *A Window in Thrums*, *Auld Licht Idylls*, and *The Little Minister*, has distinguished himself by that power

of genius to endow the least exciting incidents and the lowliest characters with interest, which is in a less or greater degree the characteristic of all who share that indescribable and indefinable gift, but which he possesses in a fulness and overflow of faculty which has very seldom been surpassed. The neighbours who surround that cottage in the little weaver-village, where the household light of Hendry and his wife Jess burns so clear, the daily incidents of their confined and narrow existence, which yet is high as heaven and deep as the most tragic emotion, the northern atmosphere with all its clouds and rains, the passers-by in the road, the slow talk with its natural humour, and its elaborate strokes of country wit: the still closer atmosphere of the little Church, with all its criticisms and suspicions of the minister, yet prompt revulsion of sentiment in his favour: remind us, yet with a touch of the difference which three quarters of a century produce, of the master-hand which created Cuddie Headrigg and Jenny Dennison, the Mucklebackits and Edie Ochiltree. The writer who can achieve so much by such limited means, and in such early years, must go far—and it is difficult to limit in anticipation the heights he may attain.

Rudyard Kipling is as different as it is possible to conceive from this historian of a Scotch village. He is the story-teller of a whole great Continent,

to which our British islands are as specks in the mists and seas. He has the eyes of an eagle, to use a well-worn simile ; his glance is like lightning penetrating to the heart of whatever group of human creatures he cares to flash that swift illumination upon. The Indian villages by night and day, the camps of fighting men, the dreary offices and lodges of exile in which Englishmen wear out their lives afar, of which he has all the knowledge that can be attained in twenty years of youthful observation ; but also the London slums which he can know only by the instantaneous impression of a glance, the fictitious life of the studio, where mediocrity toils and never comes to anything, the fiery desert, and the gleaming battle—there seems no limitation to this young story-teller's power. It would be impossible to wind up a record of living writers with anything more full of promise for the future than the names of these two young men.

CHAPTER VI

WRITERS ON ART

IT is fortunate that there can be no doubt possible as to the greatest writer on art in the Victorian age, that position belonging absolutely, from the point of view of literature, to John Ruskin (born 1819), who has not only pervaded the world with his theories, and led rightly or wrongly (and sometimes both together) the generations of his time, but added to it such a wealth of beautiful writing, expressed in the noblest language and full of the purest sentiment, as few writers of the time have equalled. This is not to say that he has always been a safe or even just guide. He has, like other men, a world of prejudices, dislikes, and aversions, which he does not, like most other men, attempt to subdue in public, but which with an amiable egotism and high yet not unjustifiable sense of his own worthiness to form an opinion, and of the unusual opportunities he has had to

enable him to do so,—he sets forth without disguise, not only praising what he loves, but denouncing what he hates with the force of infallibility. He is of the Boanerges order, an apostle of love, and full of the most amiable qualities, yet always ready to call down fire from heaven to consume those who follow another standard, or go by different rules from his. It is perhaps scarcely too much to say that the overwhelming reputation which Turner held for a time, was greatly owing to the interpretation and adoration of his chief disciple and worshipper. Turner's real fame endures, and so far as a posterity so near his own age can foresee, will endure to the end of time—if any pictures last so long; but the fury of enthusiasm which for a time encircled his name, as if no such painter had ever been, was no doubt driven into the British mind partly by the efforts of that Oxford Graduate, who, attired in the glittering panoply of literary genius and with all its weapons at his command, burst into the world of art, at once as a revolutionary and iconoclast, and the setter-up of new shrines. It very rarely happens that a devotee and fanatic in one art should be so great an ornament and influence in another. Mr. Ruskin has done much to alter the British standards in respect to all the productions of the pictorial and architectural arts; but he is himself the pride of

English literature, one of the greatest writers of this or any age.

Mr. Ruskin has himself given us, in *Praeterita*, his remarkable but unfortunately incomplete history of himself, a most attractive and minute picture of his own early training, and the manner in which his childish mind was educated in the love of everything beautiful, and at the same time in many old-fashioned bourgeois tastes and prejudices, and many cranks and twists of fancy peculiar to itself. An only child with an indulgent father and mother, who brought him up with Spartan simplicity, almost severity, though this seems a paradox,—every incident of his early life and every influence that affected it, remain as interesting and delightful to him at sixty as at twenty. In respect to education the world is divided into two classes, those who regard their own training with happy complacence, and desire that all who succeed them should be brought up just so; and those who see the defects of their education so strongly that they almost reverse it in the case of their children. Mr. Ruskin is of the first class; and it is perhaps because of the gentle strain of self-satisfaction and self-belief which runs through all his work, and the conviction that the principles which produced such a man as himself are the best that could be followed, that his autobiographical chapters are so delightful. In

his later years this beautiful conviction has become so hot and strong as to lead to the formation of much dogma and other unpleasant accompaniments of conscious infallibility: but it is otherwise so justified by the result that it is difficult not to look upon it with something of his own unmingled and exquisite pleasure in the training which made so remarkable a man.

It is inevitable with every Reformer that he should feel himself sent as to a world lying in wickedness from which every good principle and power of perception has gone. And this was the attitude taken emphatically by Mr. Ruskin in the beginning of his career. There was no doubt much warrant for it, for the English school of painting, which has always hard ado to keep itself above the level of mediocrity in art, was then at a low ebb, full of artificial brilliancy and conventional methods. The fact that English art is very much confined by our conditions of existence, and that pictures adapted for the domestic interior, for the decoration of rooms in which the ordinary living of the nineteenth century is carried on, are the only ones in much demand, cannot fail to affect, more or less, the mind of the artist; and a young revolutionary coming, storming into the exhibitions which were full of scenes from Shakespeare, in which the costume was much more important than the meaning—and historical subjects of the

same kind, and scenes from the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and illustrations of country schools, and impossible fêtes and weddings, and Sir Edwin Landseer—very naturally ran amuck among these productions, and lifted up his hand to heaven and swore that better things should be. Along with this determination to overturn the established and complacent school with which life and nature had so little to do, or which trimmed them down to so prim a standard, there arose in the young man's mind a revelation and a new light. Turner stood out before him in eccentric and irrestrainable glow of colour, rainbows and mists which were defiant of all rules, and scenes which gave sometimes the most absolutely truthful imaginative representation of nature, sometimes the ideal picturesque of the classic ages bathed in that glow of aerial light which never was on sea or shore—but seldom or never anything petty or vulgar. Mr. Ruskin at once placed himself in front of this great painter as interpreter, worshipper, advocate and champion, allowing no equal, and fiercely tilting at everything modern or ancient which put itself in competition with his hero. The curious fervour of Turner's posthumous duel with Claude so affected his knight that Mr. Ruskin would sometimes almost foam at the mouth in his assault upon the Frenchman (all unconscious of the rivalry thus forced upon him so long after his time), and pour

forth fire and flame as he scornfully discredited the lambent air and mellow glow of the Lorrainer's unpolemical, calm pictures. Thus his splendid enthusiasm, which was so real and living of its kind, carried him from the beginning into the hot injustice of the partisan.

The world, however, could not withstand the fury of such an onset, and those who did not appreciate Turner of their own impulse learned to catch the prevailing cry, and raised it to a point of extravagance. The eventual fame of a great artist is not permanently affected even by such impassioned advocacy, yet there were many found to say that Mr. Ruskin was disposed to pose as the discoverer of Turner, and to build his own eminence on that instance of discrimination. There is no reason for such a reproach. Turner was already great before Mr. Ruskin, and is still so, though the fury of his *culte* has in some degree died down.

It did not require this, however, to ensure the triumphant effect of *Modern Painters*, with its scorn of the scholastic and artificial, its noble enthusiasm for nature, and the singular beauty of its style and literary illustrations. Many passages from that book and those which immediately followed it, such as that of the writer's first view of Venice, are quoted as we should frame and hang up a picture, rather than as mere descriptions in

words are usually treated. These detachable passages are indeed pictures as noble as any Turner, and are constantly removed from the original page to be hung as it were in the picture galleries of the imagination, where they shine with a perfection of colour and tone which is often denied to the finest pigments. It sometimes happens indeed that the writer thus produces a painting, so much superior to the one on canvas which he devotes his eloquence to describe,—that we approach the subject with too great an enthusiasm and with much succeeding disappointment. The reader who is also a traveller will remember how emphatically this is the case with a certain picture in the Correr Gallery at Venice, which in his glowing way Ruskin describes as one of the absolutely best in the world, and which, to the amazed spectator hurrying to see it with that description in his hands, looks like the merest faded shadow of the splendid new Ruskin which blazes forth upon him from the printed page in lines which the original has lost, if it ever possessed them. This, however, belongs to the writer's later method, when many restraints of the earlier period were withdrawn.

The *Modern Painters* was a work produced slowly, with several others coming in during the intervals, and appeared in successive volumes from 1843 to 1860. In the meanwhile, the author

expanded himself gradually over the whole world of art, specially in the direction of Architecture and Sculpture, which were characterised by his contemporary Lord Lindsay, in his work on *Christian Art*, as forming along with Painting a Trinity on earth, symbolising the Trinity of Godhead, Architecture representing the Father, Sculpture the Son, and Painting the Holy Ghost—a suggestion which, though given forth with the most pious reverence, will strike most readers as singularly profane. Mr. Ruskin was not likely to err in any such way, but his deep consciousness of the unity and close relationship of every branch of art, and his delight in the beauty of those superlative decorations created by human genius, almost in emulation of the lavish beauty which God Himself has flung abroad even over the waste places of His universe, were continual and full of enthusiasm. The *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, which was published in 1849, was a most eloquent and delightful treatise upon the high qualities which he imagined to be embodied in the composition of the great buildings of old, and which were requisite before these could be in any way equalled by the modern worker,—qualities which involved no less than the renunciation of all the works of darkness and pursuit of everything noble and lovely and of good report, the self-denial and moral purity which are the first qualifications of a

Christian, but had not been supposed indispensable to the success of an architect. Of these the first was the lamp of truth. The symbolism was fine and the style at Mr. Ruskin's highest level of ornate speech, while the comparative absence of polemics and of the strange political theories which have in later days found so large a place in Mr. Ruskin's works, makes it one of the most beautiful of his productions. It is said to have elicited from one of his contemporaries, the well-known architect and highly original personage, Augustus Welby Pugin, the angry exclamation, "let the fellow build a house!" which is so often the answer of the practical worker to the theorist. It has never been Mr. Ruskin's function to build houses, and his strictures upon those who did, and whose theories of practice were adverse to his rules, have always been severe to the point of violence: but it was his to hang forth those lamps which have inflamed many an enthusiast and fired many an honest mind of less vehement character to seek after better things. In 1853 the *Stones of Venice* was published, and these three first productions of his genius have remained his greatest works, the first of their kind in English, we may almost say in European literature. There may have arisen architectural writers more practical and critics of art more trustworthy, but none who has adorned these subjects with the touch of

genius, or made of that supposed secondary work, which consists of comment upon other men's productions, books in themselves so enthralling and beautiful that there are few of the highest original works which the world would less willingly let die.

The *Stones of Venice* mark the beginning of that life-long adoration of the Sea City which Mr. Ruskin has communicated to so many, and which no doubt has had some share in the now rising prosperity and activity of that wonderful home of art and beauty, though no one could more heartily detest and abhor all participation in that revival than the author. His delightful expositions of the history, and loving survey of the glorious wrecks of Venice which in the first half of the century excited the enthusiasm of many chiefly because they were wrecks—are mingled with fierce denunciations of the rising of the new life in a place which in its most palmy days was nothing if not a seaport and centre of industry,—which are sometimes almost absurd in their shrill anathema notwithstanding the sympathy of the reader in them. That Venice has a right to seek her own advantage and comfort even by ways that are naturally hideous as well as utterly offensive to Mr. Ruskin is a fact which he could never allow, notwithstanding the moral certainty that the old Dandolo and Foscari would

have certainly done the same had such things been in their power. The horrible iron bridges which have been thrown over the Grand Canal find with him no excuse for their hideousness in the fact that they are a great convenience to the poorer inhabitants and save many a tedious mile of way: while with much less justice than in the case of these monstrosities, he has condemned the lights, the brightness of modern life, the new occupations which give bread to the poor Venetians, almost as if the smoky oil lamps of a hundred years ago, and the death or decadence of the great historical city were preferable to the resuscitation of that very spirit which made her originally so great. That a general abuse of all activity and new vitality should come from the disappointed dilettante who would have fain kept Italy in ruins for his own entertainment is comprehensible enough: but it comes with a bad grace from one to whom the Doges and admirals and merchants of St. Mark,—all in their generation the most modern, bustling and businesslike of men,—are objects of so much admiration. What was modern then is now ancient, and it was in its time no doubt a comelier if not so comfortable a mode of living as we now use. But no one can doubt that each successive Dandolo and Loredano would have crowded his quays with steamboats, and built his navies on the Clyde,—if he had not

already begun to build for himself as his descendants do now in the great basins of the Arsenal,—had these great inventions then existed. We must, however, do Mr. Ruskin the justice to say that his fury with the modern life of Venice and the vulgar evidence of her adaptability to everyday uses, has burst forth in later days, and was not so furious or indiscriminating in the great early work which is dedicated to her fame.

In the days when he and his friends in the studios of England were still young, there arose chiefly under his inspiration the school in art called pre-Raphaelite, which for a time threatened, or promised, to change the very foundations of art in England, taking up the ancient teaching where it was when Raphael fell, as they thought, into smooth, conventional, and artificial ways—and abandoning the elaborately arranged models of early Victorian art, to devote themselves with absolute truth to Nature, and the attempt to represent everything they saw, with all the reality and human expression after which the older masters, in their conflict with materials and rules of art as yet imperfectly understood, had struggled. It was hoped by these young men in their fervour that they should revolutionise art, and bring in a new and better era of pictorial work. It is not within our sphere to discriminate how much or how little they succeeded. After a

short period of extreme activity which produced some pictures full of originality and power, but also many in which the contortions of movement, and exaggerations of colour, and archaic pretentiousness, excited strong opposition and some ridicule, the little group dispersed on all sides, and while some remained always isolated and separate, the majority drifted back into the ordinary and more profitable ways of life and art.

It was after this movement of which he had been the heart and soul, and the dismemberment of which was connected in a painful manner with incidents in his own career, that Mr. Ruskin began to mingle singular theories of political economy with his more special subject, and to endeavour to persuade the world into a pre-scientific, as he had persuaded the painters into a pre-Raphaelite, system. In his own way he took up the philosophy of his friend and master Carlyle, and set forth the natural sway of the good and strong man over all who were weak and incapable, and the natural law of protection and cherishing rather than subjugation and tyranny, a kind of glorified Feudal system, or at least more nearly resembling that than anything that would be acknowledged by Adam Smith. His *Unto this Last*, originally published in the *Cornhill Magazine*, was one of the first of these exceedingly quaint, but always beautiful suggestions for a reformation of society,

which delighted the visionary enthusiast, but filled the vulgar mind with ridicule and made sober men pause and wonder and often smile at what is called the utterly unpractical nature of these changes. They are unpractical in the sense that Society can never go back, but is compelled by a remorseless urgency of circumstances to proceed in the course it has chosen, which in the height of modern civilisation is not often one of kindness and mercy. To give *Unto this Last* the same penny as was due to those who had undergone the burden and heat of the day, was a course which astonished the crowd even in primitive ages, and was not likely to seem more feasible in the middle of the nineteenth century.

It would be difficult and unnecessary to give a list of all Mr. Ruskin's subsequent publications. He has written, like King Solomon, upon every subject, from the greatest trees of the forest to the hyssop that groweth on the wall. He has given us the most vivid episodes of history, and the most visionary of philosophy. He has written about flowers, about education, always in his own superlative and imaginative way, about the nature and privileges of the young maiden, the King's daughter to whom he gives a fatherly adoration—about Florence, about Venice, about Edinburgh,—about art always and the falling off, especially of England, but also of the modern world in general,

from all its finer aspirations: more and more about political economy, and the cultivation of a working man such as never was by sea or shore—finally about himself, in the prolonged and often beautiful maunderings or rather meanderings of the *Praeterita*, where, amid digressions to everything human and divine that came in his way, he has given us the record of his dreamy and gentle childhood, of his pleasant life as a young man, of his mild unfulfilled loves, and the formation of his mind and gradual accession to that throne of amiable but determined autocracy from which he has exercised sway for years over a believing people. When the time comes in which the reader will see all round this very striking and remarkable figure, when his life is wound up, and his thoughts and actions brought into full perspective, it will be more easy to form a clear estimate of him than now, when natural respect and the great attraction of his singular nature veil some part of the reality on one hand, and the gaping wonder and ridicule of another section of the community obscure it on the other. But notwithstanding all the eccentric accompaniments of his genius, nothing can change Mr. Ruskin's high place in English literature as one of the most perfect masters of style and language which this century, or indeed any other, has known.

The remarkable revival of art, especially in

architecture, which took place in the middle of the century, can scarcely be attributed to the influence of any one writer or workman in this field. The unconscious co-operation of a number of accomplished students of the past, travelling about Europe after the cessation of war had made it fully open to their feet, imperceptibly brought about an interest in the great Churches and buildings of continental countries. The new traveller was not the man of society making the grand tour, and anxious to acquaint himself with the courts and nobility of the countries he passed through, and to embellish his house when he returned with spoils from the great storehouse of the past, and copies of the pictures which could not be bought or carried away,—but a more modest and more persistent inquirer, indifferent to the present, bent upon investigating the manner in which every little republic and fighting dukedom managed to secure for itself amid all its struggles the crowning glory of a splendid Church and palace, decorated within and without with a wealth which Greek architecture had not possessed, and which the dull modern imitators of Greek art had scorned in their ignorance. The important work of Lord Lindsay (1812-80), afterwards Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, upon *Christian Art*, was one which, closely following certain French works of the same description, brought this

wonderful wealth of ecclesiastical decoration with all its sacred lore, legends of the Saints and Christian symbolism of every kind, into the midst of the eager art students longing for some new thing, among whom the leaven of German, Flemish, and French, and to some extent Italian, example was already beginning to work. We have quoted above the startling metaphor of the Trinity of Art with which this writer began. His book was conceived in the spirit of the purest mediæval ecclesiasticism, and laid the system of what he calls Christian Mythology, the abundant material of story and symbolical allegory which ancient art had handled so richly, before the English artist, as well as the principles of architecture embodied in ecclesiastical construction from the times of Constantine downwards, with all their national variations and ever-increasing wealth of ornament. Lord Lindsay insisted more strongly than even Mr. Ruskin himself, whose *Lamps of Architecture* came after the publication of the *Christian Art*, upon the close connection of the three branches, each completing and enhancing the effect of the other, which fill most of the great continental Churches with splendour and meaning, a connection which the Reformation, in its fear of idolatry, had broken among ourselves. Whether the exertions of these writers were enough to create a genuine piety and reverence among the artists

whom they inspired with the principles of older and purer art, it would be hard to say—but at all events they insisted upon this temper as essential to the right carrying out of the system, and impressed upon their audience the necessity of a devout and reverent spirit as one of the first conditions of success. We cannot do more than record briefly and in passing the after career of the learned and amiable nobleman who took so marked a part in the architectural revival of the time. We say nobleman advisedly, for this is what Lord Lindsay was above all, with a sense of the special claims his rank made upon him for special courtesy and fine demeanour, but with a constant recollection of that rank which is picturesque and strange amid the equalising traditions of art. His other work of note was the exceedingly interesting and characteristic *Lives of the Lindsays*, a contribution to historical literature in the congenial form of a history of his own house. Besides these remarkable productions, the chief work of his life was the collection of a splendid library, for which he built a special house, and which he meant to form his own chief claim to distinction in the record of his race. It is impossible to conceive a concluding incident more terrible and revolting, could he have known it, to the refined and lofty pride of this born aristocrat than the horrible story of the theft of his body from its sepulchre, for the abominable

purpose of extorting money from his family, of which quite lately the details were in all the papers. Such an insult would have broken his heart. Fortunately his remains were at last restored to their resting-place. Lord Crawford would no doubt have felt it scarcely a less indignity and dishonour that his fine library should have been dispersed and broken up as it was, as soon as his life had ceased, in which it was the first object. But this is a thing which happens every day.

Sir William Stirling-Maxwell (1818-78), a critic and writer of a much broader character than Lord Lindsay, and with wider sympathies, belonged in some degree to the same class of highly cultured and leisurely writers, loving art for its own sake with the enthusiasm of the dilettante (in the highest sense of the word) rather than that of the professional workman. Under his paternal name of Stirling of Keir, the head of a good Scottish family, the possessor of one of the most beautiful houses in Scotland, which his taste and wealth embellished in a princely way, he travelled much and studied much, eventually devoting himself to Spanish art as his special field of criticism and observation. His *Annals of the Artists of Spain*, published in 1848, and a volume on *Velasquez and his Works*, which came out in 1855, secured immediate attention and interest,

and gained him recognition as one of the most trustworthy guides to this important but little known national school. His studies led him to other historical works connected with the same kingdom, the *Cloister Life of Charles V.* being the most important of them, a very attractive chapter added to the less known annals of the world. He adopted the name of Maxwell in addition to his own, succeeding to the baronetcy and estates of his uncle, Sir John Maxwell, in 1866, and entered into public life, where his principal efforts were always devoted to his favourite subject. He sat in the House of Commons rather as member for Art than for Perthshire, which was his nominal constituency, though he was in no way wanting as a great county potentate either in public spirit or hospitality. Very late in life, being then a widower, he married the well-known Mrs. Norton, a graceful writer who should have had fuller notice in her place as a poet and novelist, and who in addition to her literary gifts was one of the beauties of her time. He died at Venice sadly, alone and deserted, by some unfortunate hazard of sudden illness, in 1878.

Mrs. Jameson (1797 - 1860), born Anna Murphy, the daughter of a miniature painter, whose life after the brief episode of an unsatisfactory marriage was chiefly occupied by the literature of

art, added a series of works of lasting influence and acceptance to the more popular study of Religious Art—in the *Legends of the Saints*, told with much grace and richly illustrated from old pictures, the first of which, entitled *Legendary Art*, appeared in 1848, between the *Christian Art* of Lord Lindsay and Mr. Ruskin's *Lamps of Architecture*. A woman with much enthusiasm for art, and no inconsiderable power of literary expression, she had begun her career as a writer with other kinds of criticism, a work upon the female characters of Shakespeare having gained her much reputation, and taught the public to expect from her that kind of commentary and appreciation of beautiful things which was then considered especially suitable to feminine authors, the elegant literature of the boudoir and drawing-room, not very profound or original, but full of good, nay, fine feeling, and much prettiness both of language and sentiment. Nothing can be a better specimen of this kind of work than her *Commonplace Book*, an old-fashioned volume in which there are many scattered thoughts full of delicate discrimination, along with much that is more superficial, the whole illustrated by little drawings, which recall the lady's album and amateur sketch-book more than any more serious effort, yet forming altogether a book which in those days would have been the fittest of all presents to a thoughtful girl, and in which many

mature minds might have found something worth their while. Her intelligence, however, attained a fuller development when, after much travelling about the continent, at a time when people did not travel nearly so much as they do now, she took in hand to give the world an account of the pictures of the elder ages, which illustrated the *Legends of the Saints*. Her method was to tell these legends, much as Lord Lindsay had done, but in a more carefully classified and extended way, and to give an account as nearly as possible of all the pictures which illustrated each special subject,—in almost every case from personal inspection, and including every national school in Europe, a very large undertaking. The book was illustrated with etchings, many by her own hand, and woodcuts, of all the best pictures dedicated to the living and dying of these holy men and women,—and the first volume was so successful and received with so much favour that Mrs. Jameson was emboldened to add to it a companion volume of the *Legends of the Madonna*, in which the ever attractive group of the Mother and Child, to which the mediæval imagination dedicated itself with so much love and devotion—a theme of which neither artists nor people ever tired,—was represented in every variety of execution from the rude fathers of early Byzantine Art down to the too smooth conventional beauty of the late Italian school, the Guidos,

Correggios, and Giulio Romanos. It was a subject of almost boundless extent, and the illustrations were selected on the whole with great taste, and afforded the reader an excellent view of the painters of the Middle Ages, and their various ways of apprehending the Gospel story, especially in its earliest details. *Legends of the Monastic Orders* followed, leading the mind to subjects less divine, but more quaint, from the hermits of the Thebaid, and Mary of Egypt clothed in her hair, and St. Jerome with his lion, down to the favourite executions and martyrdoms of the Flemish school, with their blood and wounds—the poverty of Francis, and the black and white dogs of Dominic. Many of these saints were a revelation to the English mind, which had been turned away by the Reformation from the ancient cult and veneration of them, and had lost many beautiful stories by this revolution, if perhaps they had been saved from much that was not very far removed from the idol-worship of pagan times. The *Legends of the Madonna* and of the *Monastic Orders* were published in 1851 and 1852.

Mrs. Jameson's last and greatest work, planned upon a larger scale than her other books, and necessarily covering a much more extended ground, was the *Life of Our Lord*, and the extraordinary wealth of pictorial illustration which has been devoted to it through all the ages. She

lived only to execute a portion of this great work, which she did with felicity and grace. It was finished by Lady Eastlake, whose knowledge was perhaps greater than Mrs. Jameson's, but her lightness of touch and power of execution less. The concluding portion is somewhat heavy and long drawn out, but the series, as it stands, still retains its popularity, and the books are beautiful books, full of entertainment as well as of instruction—and though the number of readers who have opportunities of seeing the great pictures of the world for themselves is immensely increased since Mrs. Jameson's day, and the standard of taste is much changed with increasing knowledge, not even Mr. Ruskin has made them out of date. The Raphael-worship which still existed in her day has been changed with many into a condescending patronage of that great young master, and painters who were then thought archaic have now come into the first place. But she was enlightened enough to see the excellence of Carpaccio and Botticelli before they became the fashion. Mrs. Jameson died in 1860.

The revival of architecture to which Mr. Ruskin lent so much aid was still more indebted to a remarkable and eccentric personage, an architect by profession and descent, though we believe inheriting an unused title of ancient

French nobility, Augustus Welby Pugin, whose life was devoted to a sort of lyrical impassioned celebration of the merits of Gothic as against every other style of building. In practical work, he carried his theories through every detail of construction, making all that he did Gothic, not only in its broader features, but in the most minute particulars, devoting himself as warmly to the elaboration of rich and costly furniture, such as might have filled a mediæval palace, as to the crockets and finials and canopy work of church and hall. By the curious effect which we almost always find even in the most conscientious imitations, the furniture at least, and some part of the buildings upon which Pugin's stamp was impressed, are over-decorated and artificial, so much more elaborate than the art which they were intended to reproduce, that they were much less suitable for use in an age of easy chairs and luxurious living than the ancient articles themselves which had been softened by long use and familiarity. Pugin's chief literary work, in the polemical way which was most congenial to him, was a book called *Contrasts*, in which he portrays in engravings placed opposite to each other specimens of old Gothic ecclesiastical buildings in comparison with the models of Church building known in the beginning of the Victorian age, when art was at a very low ebb, and the amount

of pews that could be provided and comfortable sitting for the congregation was the chief thing thought of. The juxtaposition of these very different edifices made it almost unnecessary to add much literary description to the contrast which was not perhaps very fair, but was certainly very pointed : but Mr. Pugin was a master of the art of vituperation, and spared neither sarcasm nor wrath in the denunciation of false rules of art, and unworthy buildings. His works—with the exception of an exceedingly hot and furious explanation of the circumstances which led to the breaking off of his engagement with a lady to whom he was betrothed, which is a curiosity in literature—are entirely architectural and Gothic. The *True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* (1841), *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume* (1844), *Floriated Ornament* (1849), and a *Treatise on Chancel Screens and Roodlofts* (1851), being his chief literary productions. The titles of these are sufficient to show that, though he did not shrink from building a church, the test which he would fain have applied to Mr. Ruskin as already quoted, it was with ornament and decoration that he chiefly concerned himself. Into this he threw all his energies, devising, designing, and superintending works in painted glass, in which a remarkable new beginning had been made chiefly under his

auspices in opposition to the Cinque-Cento revival of that art inaugurated by Mr. Winston—in Gothic metal work of all descriptions and in every variety of ecclesiastical and other furniture as already said. The inner fittings and elaborate detail of the new Houses of Parliament were entirely executed by him, and it has been frequently alleged that the design in general of that splendid mass of building was chiefly his. His vehement and eccentric character and overwhelming energy gave him perhaps an undue importance personally in the new art-movement while he lived, and his written productions were racy with the headstrong spirit of the man, though not distinguished by any great literary gift. He published an Earnest Appeal in 1851 in support of the Papal Aggression, as it was called; of that time, being a fervent Catholic—which was not altogether to the taste of his ecclesiastical superiors, and in which traces were perceptible of the failure of his mind which shortly after ended in pronounced insanity. He died without recovering his reason in 1852.

James Fergusson (born 1808), whose life was entirely given up to architecture though it was not his profession, began life as a partner in a mercantile house in Calcutta, and wisely secured for himself a small competence before he gave

himself over to the pursuits in which his whole heart was. He began his literary work by several treatises on *Ancient Architecture in Hindostan*, the *Rock - Cut Temples of India*, and other similar books, and in this way contributed much to the care and preservation of these remarkable monuments by stirring up the attention of the Directors of the East India Company, who were then supreme in that vast continent. In 1851, having been greatly interested in Sir Henry Layard's discoveries at Nineveh, he wrote a paper on the architecture of the disinterred city, and took a great share in arranging the Assyrian house, which was built as one of the attractions of the new Crystal Palace. In 1849 he published a *Historical Inquiry into the true Principles of Beauty in Art, more especially in regard to Architecture*, which he considered his best work, an opinion, however, which the public does not seem to have shared. His interest was very strongly attracted at one period of his life by Jerusalem, and especially by the buildings now standing on the Haram-esh-Sherif, the ancient Temple area, his opinion being that the real situation of Calvary and of the Sepulchre of our Lord was there, and that the Dome of the Rock, vulgarly known as the Mosque of Omar, was the Church built by Constantine over the tomb of our Lord—a startling suggestion which, however, goes against every

possibility, since the Jews, who were defiled and unable to present themselves in the temple if they so much as touched a dead person, were most unlikely to have made their holiest place the scene of an execution and burial. It is said, however, though we do not know with what truth, that the controversy caused by this theory was instrumental in creating the Palestine Exploration Fund which has done such excellent work since. Mr. Fergusson's most important work, however, was the *History of Architecture*, published in three volumes between the years 1865 and 1867, which has taken its place as the standard work on the subject, the most full and trustworthy guide to which the student can resort. Without any bigotry in favour of one style—that enthusiasm which gives so much heat and vehemence to some of the works already quoted—he gives an admirable account of that variation and development for good and for evil which is one of the most striking features of architecture, and by which it is so interesting to trace the passage of the centuries, often within the walls of a single great building, thus made by the successive works of its creators, into a historical record of the most noble and lasting kind. Fergusson's last work upon *Fire and Serpent Worship*, illustrations of mythology and art in India, was published in a semi-official way under the auspices of Government.

He died in 1886, after a life crowded with work and endeavour, and thoroughly useful both to his country and mankind.

Among those who had most to do with the practical carrying out of the revival of Gothic architecture, of which so much has been said, an important place is due to Sir Gilbert Scott (1811-78), one of the most well-known architects of our time, who, while producing churches and other public buildings without number, produced also several books, *A Plea for the faithful restoration of our Parish Churches*, *Remarks on Secular and Domestic Architecture*, *Conservation of Ancient Monuments*, etc. His pupil, Mr. George Edmund Street (1824-81), combined the love of Gothic art with much enthusiasm for early Italian work, and wrote an interesting and valuable book upon the *Brick and Marble Architecture of Northern Italy in the Middle Ages*. Mr. Owen Jones, in a less elevated sphere, did much to instruct the taste of the Victorian age (at first almost non-existent) by his *Grammar of Ornament* and other works published in the early part of the reign. The *Handbook for Young Painters*, published in 1855 by Charles Robert Leslie (1794-1859), Royal Academician, must not be omitted among the books of the time.

Music has shared during our age the remarkable revival which has taken place in other arts, but naturally it is less to literary aid than to its

own exertions, and the gradual awakening of the public mind to greater requirements in that branch of human science, and better understanding of its great models, that this advance is due. Meanwhile there have not been wanting writers who have devoted themselves to its history and exposition, with great knowledge of the subject and much devotion to it. Henry Fothergill Chorley (1800-72), though a journalist, and to some extent writer on general subjects, was especially known as a musical critic, and deeply engaged in the exposition and furtherance of everything connected with this art. He was a songwriter esteemed in his day, though that species of literature is more than usually ephemeral; but his chief works were one on *German Music*, which increased the acquaintance of the British public with the productions of the most musical of nations, and *Thirty Years' Musical Recollections*, which is chiefly concerned with the great singers of this and the previous generations. John Hullah, himself an eminent musician, and the author of the system which has spread an elementary knowledge of music to a very large extent over the face of the country, has also written a *History of Music*, published in 1861, which has done still better work, and furnishes an interesting study of the progress of the art especially in this country. The *Dictionary*

of Music and Musicians, edited by Sir George Grove, is in its way a monumental work, and contains admirable biographies of all the chief musicians, thus supplying in the best and most interesting way a history of music in all its schools and developments, with which nothing at least in our language can compete. Music, however, is of its nature independent of literature, and somewhat scornful of its expositions.

CHAPTER VII

OF THE LATER HISTORIANS, BIOGRAPHERS, ESSAY- ISTS, ETC., AND OF THE PRESENT CONDITION OF LITERATURE

IT is by no means so easy a task to deal with writers who are either living, or, at any rate, have only lately gone from among us, as with those whose work belongs to a past generation. The immense increase in the number of the writers of the present day is alone sufficient to render the work more difficult, and we do not pretend to include all the books on any of the subjects we are dealing with. At the same time, it would be a most invidious duty were we called upon to measure out applause or censure to even the most eminent of living authors as we are able to do with those whose career is already closed and whose works can be reviewed as a whole. It will therefore be found that we have spoken at length only of dead writers, giving to the living

such notice as is necessary to give a general idea of the scope and purpose of their work.

The most eminent historical writers of our own time are for the most part still among us. Yet there are gaps, where some have been taken from the world in the fulness of years, and others while yet in the prime of life. It is not many years since we had to lament the early death of one of the most brilliant historical writers of the time. John Richard Green was born in the year of Her Majesty's accession, and educated at Magdalen College School and Jesus College, Oxford. From his earliest youth he had delighted chiefly in historical studies, and showed his characteristic spirit of critical independence in an essay upon Charles I., whom the young writer, in spite of careful training in the straitest sect of middle-class Toryism, felt himself bound to pronounce against. Fortunately for himself, however, Green was no infant prodigy, and the only marked characteristic of his university life was his devotion to the works of the early chroniclers. After taking his degree in 1859 he was ordained and became a curate in a poor district of London. He afterwards held two livings in succession under similar conditions, and did much hard and conscientious work as a parish priest, but his health finally broke down under the strain of his clerical duties, increased by intense application to historical studies. Archbishop Tait,

who had long had his eye upon Green, appointed him to the pleasant and suitable post of librarian at Lambeth, and he gave up his more onerous clerical work to devote himself entirely to literature. As yet he had written little ; some sketches of *Oxford in the Eighteenth Century*, published in his youth in an Oxford paper, had pleased a limited public, and at a later period some pungent essays of social criticism in the *Saturday Review* gave to the initiated a suggestion of much satirical power ; but his name was yet almost unknown when the *Short History of the English People*, published in 1874, took the world by storm. The animated and poetical style, the independent and original judgments, as well as the novel conception of the whole, at once attracted the admiration of the great majority of its readers. It is not perhaps a work of faultless accuracy, but that is hardly to be expected from a book which is written up to a theory ; for facts, as looked upon by the spectator whose mind is already made up on the subject, show the most obliging readiness to assume any form he chooses. The literary power of Green is undeniable ; in some passages, as in his account of the last uprising of Wales before its conquest by Edward I., his naturally picturesque style develops into genuine poetry, while his narrative is usually spirited and his delineation of character striking,

if perhaps a little too imaginative. Yet we think that those have formed too high an estimate of his qualities who would rank him with Macaulay. His narrative power is confined to occasional episodes, between which we find intervals where the interest languishes, if it does not die altogether ; if we are tempted to go on beyond a period which has pleased us, it is not because the enchantment of the narrative carries us on, but because we hope to find in a new chapter another unconnected passage as spirited as that we have been reading ; and this expectation is often disappointed. Having once gained the attention of his audience by a masterly summary of English history, Green hoped to retain it for the larger work into which the *Short History* was expanded. This attempt, however, was not so successful. The larger history may have gained in value as a class-book by its more elaborate form ; as a literary effort it lost in terseness and force more than it gained by higher elaboration. After the four-volume *History*, the author apparently gave up his mission of instructing the people, and took to the comparatively unimportant amusement of writing for the few whose learning was equal to his own. The *Making of England*, published in 1881, and the *Conquest of England*, which only appeared after his death in 1883, belonged to the latter class.

A very different type of historian was that represented by John Sherren Brewer. Green was essentially a writer of that class whose goods are all exhibited in the shop window, while it is probably due to his extreme absence of ostentation that the world at large is not sufficiently acquainted with the solid, quiet merit of Brewer. Born in 1810, the son of a Baptist schoolmaster at Norwich, Brewer joined at an early age the Church of England, went to Oxford, and after taking a brilliant degree was ordained and appointed chaplain to a London workhouse. After some years of zealous work in this capacity, he resigned his appointment in consequence of differences with the Vicar of St. Giles', and for some time found no work to do in his sacred profession. He was already noted for his extraordinarily wide reading, had edited the *Ethics of Aristotle* at an early period of his life, and had done some work for the Record Commission. He now devoted himself to increasing his knowledge by reading at the British Museum and got a small appointment as classical lecturer at King's College, afterwards succeeding his friend, Frederick Denison Maurice, as Professor of English Literature and Modern History. Brewer also did a good deal of journalistic work for the *Standard*, *Morning Post*, and other papers. In 1856 he was entrusted by the authorities of the Record Office with the preparation of a

calendar of the state papers of the time of Henry VIII., which in his hands became one of the most valuable additions to the literature published under the auspices of the Master of the Rolls. The work by which he is principally known, the history of the *Reign of Henry VIII.*, published some years after his death by his friend, Mr. James Gairdner, consists in reality of the prefaces he supplied to the different volumes of his *Calendar*. It is, however, a sound and scholarly review of that intricate and much-disputed period. Brewer also wrote several treatises on matters connected with the Church, and was the editor of reproductions of Fuller's *Church History*, Bacon's *Novum Organum*, and other works, that excellent school compendium of English history, the *Student's Hume*, being among his compilations. He died in 1879. Mr. Gairdner, to whom we have referred above, has ably followed out the work originated by Professor Brewer, and is considered one of the greatest authorities on the history of England in the fifteenth and the early part of the sixteenth centuries. He has been Assistant Keeper of the Records—after thirteen years' service in the office—since 1859, and has added immensely to the knowledge of the reign of Henry VII. in particular, of whom he has contributed a biography to the series of *English Statesmen*. Among his original works we may mention the valuable *Life*

of *Richard III.*, and the volume on the *Houses of Lancaster and York*, in the series of *Epochs of Modern History*. Mr. Gairdner's fame would rest on a sure basis, were it only supported by the delightful historical memoirs contributed to the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

Among other inquirers into the same period we must necessarily give the highest place to the name of Mr. James Anthony Froude, the most brilliant, if not the most accurate, of recent historians. Mr. Froude made his first appearance in literature as a supporter of the Oxford movement and an adherent to the principles advocated by Newman, in which phase of mind he made a conspicuous contribution to the *Lives of the English Saints*. His present readers have probably forgotten that he once took Deacon's orders in the Church of England. The *Nemesis of Faith*, published in 1848, showed, however, his appreciation of what Carlyle called the 'Exodus from Houndsditch,' that is, the rejection of what Mr. Froude describes as the Hebrew mythology. In 1856 appeared the commencement of his *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada*, a very remarkable book, perhaps since Macaulay's time the most excellently written historical work that has been added to English literature. Mr. Froude is a strong partisan—probably his work would not be nearly so

interesting if he were not so,—and he had collected much new and valuable matter from the archives of Simancas. The bias, however, of his writing is perhaps almost too strong, and it is difficult to thoroughly appreciate his work unless one entirely agrees with him. It had been our lot to enter deeply into a small incident contained in the extensive scope of his history. We afterwards read his account of the same episode founded undoubtedly upon the original papers we had been studying, and we were lost in wonder at the extraordinary art with which he had developed the dry bones of a little-considered incident into a very picturesque passage, and the strange bent of mind which had obscured all but one side of the story of this inconsiderable event. But, as we have often repeated, facts really depend on the way they are looked at, and Mr. Froude has unquestionably made admirable use of his materials in forming so eminently readable a history.

The virtues and faults of the *History* are characteristic of almost all Mr. Froude's works. *Oceana* is a most charming sketch of the colonies, but we have found few colonists who acknowledge its truth except as regards the countries with which they are unacquainted ; perhaps this proves how true its views are. We ourselves are content in any case to re-read its perfect English. The brilliant sketch entitled *Cæsar* is none the less

attractive that we regard it as a mere caricature of Roman history. In his novel of the *Two Chiefs of Dunboyne* alone, so far as we know, has Mr. Froude failed to impart any interest to his work. Of his connection with Carlyle we have already spoken.

Among other prominent writers who have devoted their attention chiefly to particular periods, no name stands higher than that of Samuel Rawson Gardiner. Professor Gardiner—who holds, as it is almost unnecessary to say, the chair of history at King's College, London—has by his last work, published not long ago, completed his laborious undertaking of giving a complete history of England during the seventeenth century. It is undoubtedly the most painstaking and we should say the most carefully accurate historical work that we have known; that it is not as interesting as some brilliant works that have been written with all the ardour of a partisan is perhaps as much a praise as a censure. Human nature instinctively recoils from the even level of unbiassed accuracy, but as a work of reference Professor Gardiner's history will probably remain without a rival. Something of the same praise might be given to the work of Edward Augustus Freeman (1823-92), Regius Professor of History at Oxford, of whose lamented death we have only heard since these lines were originally written. But severe as

is the unflinching correctness of Mr. Freeman, he is not above the human weakness of picturesque writing. The *Norman Conquest* and the *Reign of William Rufus* would live by their literary power, if there was no more truth in them than in the leasings of Hector Boece, that most delightful of imaginative chroniclers. We bear Mr. Freeman a grudge for introducing into the harmless English language various loathly distortions of familiar names, such as Eadwine or Ecghberht, which belong to no language known in the nineteenth century, and for whose accuracy, if accurate these relics of barbarism be, the inveterate angliciser of every French name he uses can advance no defence. But he does not always write in early Gothic dialects, and the value of his historical writings cannot be disputed. Mr. Freeman's early writings on architecture are perhaps less known than they deserve to be.

A more remarkable figure from a literary point of view than any of those we have mentioned—with the possible exception of Mr. Froude—was Alexander William Kinglake. Born in 1811 and educated at Eton, Kinglake was moved by his natural love of adventure to undertake in early life that journey to the Levant, Syria, and Egypt, which has since become familiar to every English reader through the fascinating pages of *Eothen*. This charming little work, spontaneous as it

appears to be, as if it had flowed smoothly off the pen at once without a pause, was in reality recast more than once by the painfully conscientious author before it was finally given to the world in 1844, some years after the actual journey. Few books have been more thoroughly appreciated by the reading public. The ground was still comparatively new, and the tale, which was told with so much freshness and charm, was still one of excitement and occasional danger. *Eothen* is indeed a perfect gem of literary art, with its blending of a refined and scholarly style with an almost familiar lightness of narrative, and the overflowing but always delicate humour with which it is enlivened. Few can read, for instance, the reflections on the suggestion of the author's dragoman that an inferior servant who had committed some fault should be put to death, or the story which tells how he and a Russian general who was his fellow traveller took a small Levantine seaport by storm in defiance of all authorities and regulations, without admiring the manner in which the exuberant, almost rollicking, humour is kept within the bounds of such an exquisite taste. For ourselves, we will admit that there are some passages dealing with the Holy Land, in which we find an excessive touch of flippancy ; we should read by preference the parts of the book which treat of other places.

The universal applause with which *Eothen* was received appeared to suffice for the author, who at least showed no desire of achieving further literary fame. Ten years later when the Crimean war broke out, he was among the first to get to the scene of action for no particular purpose that we are aware of, except to see the fun. Lord Raglan was very civil to him, when a small mishap occurred to him at the commencement of the battle of the Alma, through the slipping of his saddle (of which "Jacob Omnium" wittily said that Kinglake was the first who fell on the British side, a joke which gave the latter what we should consider rather causeless offence)—and meeting him later, at that wretched hour when the unofficial supernumerary wanders helplessly in search of food, asked him to dinner. It is no wonder if Kinglake's view of subsequent events was somewhat affected by the remembrance of this truly noble action. We believe that it was at the suggestion of Lord Raglan's family that the *History of the War in the Crimea* was originally undertaken, in which case they have deserved well of their country. We have no space to enter into any kind of analysis of that great work. The wonderful power of the writer is shown by the fact that the charm of the narrative is little impaired by the excessive minuteness of detail which was a consequence of Kinglake's elaborately conscientious

inquiry into the real nature of things. An incident of his history would afford him almost endless matter for pondering, during which process almost every conceivable view of the situation came before his mind, with the natural result that the final idea thus evolved was presented to the public in a highly complex and elaborate form. In some cases, as Sir Edward Hamley pointed out in an article on the subject, this careful elaboration is not an advantage.

The charge of the Heavy Brigade, for example (he says), was an affair of minutes ; and when it came to be expanded into seventy pages of history, the distinctive character of a short cavalry encounter was necessarily lost. On the other hand, the long and confused struggle of Inkermann formed a much more suitable subject for close investigation ; and the result was that, for the first time, the phases of that obstinate and desultory conflict were made intelligible.

On the whole, history is the gainer by this painful process of thought, though in some special cases, as in that mentioned in the above criticism, the temporary interest of the narrative suffers. Kinglake has been accused of injustice to some of the characters in that great episode, especially to Napoleon III. and to the French commanders generally. He was certainly a man of strong feelings, not unapt to take a prejudice for or against a statesman or commander, and the evil

he saw he had no wish to cloak or minimise : but we think, on the whole, that with the possible exception of his view of Napoleon, his criticism was cool and sound, and in most cases impartial. His generous admiration of the genius of the Russian General, Todleben, is as marked as his personal predilection for the British commander-in-chief. The publication of the seven volumes of the *History of the War in the Crimea* extended over nearly a quarter of a century, from 1863 to 1887 ; it was the great work of his life, and he practically attempted no other. In 1857 he was returned to Parliament in the Liberal interest for Bridgewater, but he never made any particular mark in the House of Commons, his voice being low, his manner quiet and his cast of mind perhaps too judicial for the political arena. He died in the end of 1890. Sir Edward Bruce Hamley, K.C.B., the distinguished soldier and man of letters, to whose obituary article on his friend Kinglake we have referred above, is also the author of a valuable account of the Crimean war, and of many minor works including some clever novels. It is recorded as a striking instance of that implicit and instant obedience which is the glory of the British army, that Colonel Hamley, as he then was, having received from a brother officer a copy of the *Times* containing a review of *Lady Lee's Widowhood* just before the Balaclava charge,

led his men to the attack of the Russian guns without stopping to see if it was favourable. With a literary man certainly the force of duty could no farther go. Sir Edward and his brother, General W. G. Hamley, have also long been counted among the most eminent contributors to *Blackwood*; the latter is also the author of some successful novels.

The history of law and social organisation is a branch of general history which yields in importance to none, and indeed as it lies at the root of all changes and developments is almost more important to the student if not to the general reader than any narrative of those events which have been brought about by the working of its universal principles. The greatest writer on these subjects in the Victorian age is undoubtedly Sir Henry James Sumner Maine, a name of the greatest weight in many regions, from the imperial councils and classic shades of the universities down to the *Quarterly Review* and the *Times*, in all of which differing seats of power he was conspicuous and great. He was born in 1822 and educated at Christ's Hospital, another of the many distinctions of that great school, and at Pembroke College, Cambridge. His career from the first was exceptionally brilliant. Senior classic, Craven scholar, and everything else that a Cambridge graduate desires to be, he began his active career at the age

of twenty-five as Professor of Civil Law in his own University, after which he became Reader in Jurisprudence at the Middle Temple. His great work on *Ancient Law* was produced, however, in the full maturity of his genius in 1861, and immediately gave him the highest place among contemporary writers. It was published soon after Darwin's great work on the *Origin of Species*, and was founded on a similar conception of the development of all our systems of existing order—on, however, a basis less indebted to conjecture and hypothesis, and more securely seated upon acknowledged and evident bulwarks of fact, than any physiological argument. The phenomena of law and society, arising as they do within the limits of human history, and dealing with man as the being we know, must always be felt by the sober mind to form a subject of more hopeful research than the manner in which that complex and wonderful creature came to be. Maine treated his great subject not only with singular learning and logic, but with the advantages of a lucid style and much fine literary power—making of a very abstruse inquiry, handled in a new and unusual method, a book as agreeable to read as it was valuable and important in historical science. If it is too much to say that he “created a new method for the study of legal ideas and the institutions founded upon them,” it is yet certain

that no one up to his time had used that method so powerfully.

After the publication of this remarkable work he was appointed legal member of the Governor-General's Council in India, a post which Macaulay as well as other notable men had held before him ; and thus was withdrawn to a certain extent from the general world by that fascination so strongly exercised by the East, and which his mind, attracted above all things by the conditions of primitive society, and with a special faculty for tracing those almost immemorial lines which connect civilisation with its fountain-head, felt in its full force. His studies in this region bore fruit in his work on *Village Communities*, his lectures on the *Early History of Institutions* and others. On his return from India Sir Henry Maine, now K.C.S.I., was elected at once a member of the Council of India and to the Chair of Jurisprudence in Oxford, which latter post he held for seven years. He was afterwards Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, with which, however, his name is but little associated, as his heart and duties were still with India, to which he dedicated the greater part of his subsequent life. Honours and distinctions were showered upon him on all sides. He was offered the position of permanent Under Secretary for the Home Department, of Chief Clerk of the House of Commons, and indeed it would

seem of almost everything worth acceptance : but preferred his position in the regulation of the affairs of India to all. Finally he accepted the professorship of International Law at Cambridge towards the end of his life. He died at Cannes in 1888.

The special work of analysing the constitutional history of England has been ably undertaken by more than one writer of our day. Sir Thomas Erskine May (1815-86), long widely known and respected in his office of Clerk of the House of Commons, took up this subject where Hallam left it, and by his *Constitutional History of England since the Accession of George III.*, published in 1861-63, made a valuable addition to historical literature. Of even greater importance was his treatise on the *Law, Privilege, Proceedings, and Usage of Parliaments*, a work which is still the standard authority on the difficult questions of which it treats. Sir Erskine May, while a very weighty writer, conscious of the importance of his subject and rather careless of literary effect, had nevertheless a very pleasing manner of conveying his knowledge. It was presented in a very strong solution, but a solution with a pleasant taste. On retiring from his office in the House of Commons, Erskine May was raised to the peerage and chose the title of Lord Farnborough, but died before the patent could be made out. Another great

authority on the same subject is the present Bishop of Oxford, Dr. William Stubbs, formerly for nearly twenty years Regius Professor of History at Oxford. Dr. Stubbs is the author of a very valuable, if not particularly entertaining, *Constitutional History of England in its Origin and Development*, and many other historical works : and has edited many ancient chronicles for the Record Office. The Episcopal Bench also contains in the person of one of its youngest members, the present Bishop of Peterborough, a fertile historical writer, whose *History of the Papacy during the Period of the Reformation*, *Age of Elizabeth*, *Life of Simon de Montfort*, and other works are of at least technical importance. Before his appointment to succeed Dr. Magee at Peterborough, Dr. Mandell Creighton had been Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Cambridge, and has been since its institution in 1886 editor of the *Historical Review*. Among minor historical writers we may mention the name of John Robert Seeley, Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, author of the *Life and Times of Stein*, the *Expansion of England*, *Greater Greece and Greater Britain*, and other similar works. Professor Seeley is, however, best known by the work entitled *Ecce Homo : a Survey of the Life and Work of Jesus Christ*, which created an immense sensation at the time of its appearance in 1865. Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke, who is

more eminent in the world of politics, may also be quoted in this connection for his remarkable work on *Greater Britain*, published in 1868.

Scotland, as we have already said, has not been fortunate in her historians, but the last generation produced one of the most conscientious efforts in this line. Unfortunately, John Hill Burton (1809-81) was one of those historians who write wisely but not well. The profundity of his researches no one will be inclined to dispute, but he was unfortunately deficient in the qualities required for laying the results of his learning before the world. His *History of Scotland*, published in seven volumes between the years 1853 and 1870, is the most complete work of the kind we have, as it takes us from the earliest times when the first reliable information is supplied by Tacitus' account of the invasion of Agricola to the rebellion of 1745. We cannot call it dry, because that word represents to our mind the class of works of information which are merely devoid of literary art. Burton's *History* has a graver fault; it is wordy. The incidents of his narrative are buried under an avalanche of verbiage from which it is impossible to extricate them without a long and toilsome search. This defect makes it especially difficult to use his work as a book of reference, the want of clearness and connection of narrative making it almost impossible to follow the course of an

episode, even if we are lucky enough to discover where it begins or ends. Oddly enough in his lighter works, such as the *Book-Hunter*, a series of essays on bibliographical subjects, republished from *Blackwood's Magazine*, he was more successful. His biographies, especially that of Hume, obtained a fair share of praise. He also wrote a *History of the Reign of Queen Anne*. For the rest, the literature of Scottish history has been chiefly kept up by the usual violent warfare concerning the merits or demerits of Queen Mary. The late John Hosack, a well-known advocate, distinguished himself especially as counsel for the defence, his principal work, *Mary Queen of Scots and her Accusers*, being about the best production on that side. Another energetic champion of the unhappy Queen, Mr. John Skelton,—better known to the reading public as “Shirley,” a pseudonym under which he has published some delightful volumes of essays—has further taken upon himself to rehabilitate Maitland of Lethington, of whose career he has in recent years published a masterly survey.

The present century has been singularly fertile in those humbler labourers in the field of historical research whose business it is to bring the bricks for others to build with. In our own day we see this meritorious occupation of collecting facts for which perhaps no use at all may be found, but which on the other hand may save some master

workman a little time in the search for materials, carried to an extraordinary height. The amount of careful and painstaking observers who confine themselves wholly to such work as that of transcribing, for instance, parish registers full of utterly insignificant names, on the off chance that one of them may supply a missing link in some genealogist's researches, is growing every year. It is true that similar self-denying work has been often done in science by obscure men who have been content to observe, only that others might in time deduce from their observations ; but there is a freemasonry of science which makes this somehow appear less remarkable. Among those who have been occupied more with the materials of history than with history itself we may mention Peter Cunningham (1816-69), son of the poet, Allan Cunningham, whose *Handbook of London* is probably his best-known work, and Thomas Wright (1810-77), who was, among other works, the editor of a collection of the *Political Songs of England from John to Edward II.*, and the author of an interesting *History of Caricature*. But the numbers of the rank and file of history are too great for us to deal with otherwise than as a whole.

Among British historians who went farther afield for materials, Sir John William Kaye chose the sensational events of recent Indian history for his subject. Born in 1814 and educated at Eton

and at the Addiscombe Military College, Kaye went out to India at an early age, and served for some years in the Bengal Artillery. He resigned his commission in 1837 and took up literature as a profession, taking a leading part in the establishment of the *Calcutta Review*, of which he was the first editor. A few years later he entered the East India Company's Civil Service, and when the Government of India was transferred to the Crown, was appointed to succeed John Stuart Mill in the important office of Secretary to the Political and Secret Department. His valuable service in this quality procured him a Knight Commandership in the Order of the Star of India. In 1874 he resigned his office in consequence of ill-health, and died in 1876. Kaye was a hard and conscientious worker, and his many contributions to the history of India are regarded as of standard authority. He was also a cool and judicious thinker, singularly impartial in temper, and a writer of undeniable brilliancy and power. His best-known works are the *History of the War in Afghanistan* and the *History of the Indian Mutiny*. Both of these remarkable works are conspicuous by the force and vividness of picturing which lends a special charm to what must under any circumstances be a narrative of thrilling interest. The latter has the still greater quality of being strictly impartial in a case where rigid

fairness of judgment seems almost inconceivable for an Englishman who had been at work in India through all that dreadful period. Not one point of the terrible narrative is slurred over or exaggerated. The atrocities committed by the mutineers, sedulously stripped of all the exaggerations of fear and anger, are presented in their naked brutality, a picture rendered more frightful by its rigid truthfulness; the awful retribution exacted by the inexorable Neale—upon whom be peace, for he was a gallant soldier and the saviour of life and honour to hundreds of our countrymen and women—is described in the same spirit of steadfast accuracy without fear or favour. It has always been a matter of wonder to us how little real appreciation there seems to be of the merits of so great a historian as Sir John Kaye.

Foreign history has never had very much attraction for English writers, but there have been a certain number of exceptions in our time. Thomas Henry Dyer (1804-88) is well known for his elaborate and conscientious *History of Modern Europe*, from the taking of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 to the close of the Crimean war. It is remarkable for the lucid manner in which it deals with the curious revolution that followed upon the establishment of the Turk in Europe, the exchange of the old religious for a new political unity, and the gradual building-up of our modern

Europe and its ideas upon the balance of power, the explanation of which problem was Dyer's principal object. He was also the author of a *Life of Calvin* and several works on ancient history. A hardly smaller field is approached by Mr. James Bryce, Regius Professor of Civil Law at Oxford, in his *Holy Roman Empire*, a profound study which is in some degree lightened by pleasant writing. Professor Bryce is a fertile writer, his latest production of mark being a valuable work on the *American Commonwealth*. He is also known as an active politician, and was Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs during Mr. Gladstone's brief tenure of office in 1885-86, and holds another post in the present (1892) government.

A still more difficult subject for an Englishman to deal with has been attacked with considerable success by Eyre Evans Crowe (1799-1868) in his painstaking and dispassionate *History of France*, originally contributed to Lardner's *Cabinet Cyclopædia*, and afterwards expanded into the five volumes in which it appeared between 1858 and 1868. Crowe was also the author of a *History of Louis XVIII. and Charles X.* and of several novels. He did much journalistic work, being the Paris correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle*, and afterwards working in a similar capacity for the *Examiner*. On the starting of the *Daily News* in 1846 he became a contributor to its pages, and

was for a short time its editor in 1849-51. One of his sons, Mr. Joseph Archer Crowe, is known as the author, in conjunction with Signor Cavalcaselle, of a *History of Italian Painting*, a *Life of Titian*, and other works on artistic subjects, full of information, but entirely destitute of literary merit.

A remarkable work on Italian history is that of Mr. John Addington Symonds on the *Renaissance in Italy*, in which the history, commonly so called, of that period, its society, literature, and art are treated with equal care and skill. Mr. Symonds is also the author of *Studies of the Greek Poets*, *Sketches in Italy and Greece*, and other works on subjects generally more or less connected with art. The history of Greece has been laid before the world, as only a man possessing such an extensive and thorough knowledge of the country could do, by George Finlay (1799-1875). In early life Finlay had taken up the cause of Greece with youthful enthusiasm, and had fought for her—as did his brother, Kirkman Finlay, who lost his life in her service—under the Greek filibuster, Odysseus, in the Morean expedition, and though utterly disgusted with the degraded Greek character, continued to do his utmost for the country in which all his later life was spent. As a writer, he took up the history of Greece where it is usually left, at the Roman conquest, and in a series of able and thoughtful

works carried on the history of Greek slavery under Roman, Venetian, and Turkish masters to the final emancipation in which he had himself been a labourer. The whole of his historical work was collected at his death, and published by the Clarendon Press in 1877 as one complete book, under the title of a *History of Greece from its Conquest by the Romans to the present Time, B.C. 146 to A.D. 1864*. A word of praise must be given to the able and successful editor under whose care this great work was produced, the Rev. Henry Fanshawe Tozer, Fellow and Tutor of Exeter College.

Like Finlay in the wide range of his work, but vastly inferior to him as a writer, Sir Edward Shepherd Creasy (1812-78), a lawyer of some distinction, and for ten years Chief Justice of Ceylon, applied himself to both ancient and modern history. In 1852 he published his best-known work, the *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World*, which has attained a popularity by no means commensurate with its literary merit. He was also the author of a *History of the Ottoman Turks*, a *History of England*, intended to extend to five volumes, of which only two were ever published, and other historical works. Many valuable works have been added to the literature of ancient history in recent years. A prominent place in this department must be given to the Very Rev.

Charles Merivale, Dean of Ely, who is best known by his *History of the Romans under the Empire*, published in eight volumes between the years 1850 and 1862. The same writer has produced a *General History of Rome from the Foundation of the City to the Fall of Augustulus*, which has a certain value, some useful *Lectures on Early Church History*, and other works on historical and ecclesiastical subjects. The Rev. George Rawlinson, Canon of Canterbury, sometime Bampton Lecturer and Camden Professor of Ancient History at Oxford, made his mark as a historian by the *Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World*, but has perhaps rendered greater service to the research into the early annals of civilisation by his admirable translation of *Herodotus* with copious notes, in which he received much assistance from his brother, Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson, G.C.B., whose immense knowledge of Eastern antiquities has made him almost as great a name as his distinguished services to the State in India and elsewhere. Some mention must be made of the important work of Dr. William Smith, the present editor of the *Quarterly Review*, for the valuable dictionaries of *Greek and Roman Antiquities*, of *Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*, and of *Greek and Roman Geography*,—abridgments of which are the most trusted books of reference among the

schoolboys and students of our time,—as well as by those which deal with the Bible, with *Christian Antiquities* and *Christian Biography*. Among many works on early Church History, we are not acquainted with any so complete, scholarly, and entertaining a work as the *History of the Christian Church to the Reformation*, by the late Rev. James Craigie Robertson (1813-82), formerly Professor of Ecclesiastical History at King's College, London.

It is not an easy task to deal with the biography of this reign. The vast extent to which that branch of literature has recently grown makes it entirely impossible for us to enter into any detailed study of it, nor is this desirable. The great mass of biographies can only be said to belong to literature in so far as they are printed upon paper and bound into volumes. For it is a curious delusion in this amusing age that so extremely delicate and difficult a branch of literature can be undertaken by any one without either experience in writing or any natural qualification for the task. There is some excuse perhaps for a son or a near relation taking upon him such an enterprise, because he may be desirous to retain the letters and other materials required for biographical work in his own hands, and may also be supposed to have the closest acquaintance with the subject. But the most miserable productions

in this line have generally not even the excuse of relationship. The public is probably most to blame in the matter; the great mass of readers who do not care three straws whether the biographer is of the type of Sir George Trevelyan or of the type of Mr. Frith, but only want to know private details concerning the subject of the biography, why he wore his hat on the back of his head, whether it is true that he drank brandy before breakfast, or what was the real history of the quarrel with his first wife. Details of this kind can indeed be furnished by almost any one, but a genuine biography perhaps requires a little more. We can certainly point to one recent case where a competent writer was carefully chosen, in Mr. Andrew Lang's *Life of Lord Iddesleigh*. Mr. Lang had, we believe, no special connection with the subject of his biography, which was entrusted to him simply as to an able man of letters, and perhaps also as one who held similar political opinions to those of Lord Iddesleigh. The result in this case was satisfactory to every one, and we only wish the experiment could be repeated. We certainly should suggest, if we must have a memoir of everybody, that these memoirs should be written by competent hands: and if the mania of writing biographies, continues, we should almost recommend the appointment of a staff of trained biographers, who should alone be permitted to

take up such a task. As to autobiography and recollections, we have little to say further than that they provide an agreeable occupation for elderly gentlemen who have retired from their professions: the few of this class which survive their own generation must be of very extraordinary literary merit. The gentlemen who, while still in the middle of their career, interview themselves for the amusement of the public, are no more to be numbered in the ranks of literature than the giant who exhibits his monstrous proportions to the crowd at a fair for so much a head can be considered as an actor.

A genuine professional—or perhaps it would be more polite to say professed—biographer was John Forster. Born in 1812, the son of a butcher at Newcastle, and educated at the grammar school of his native town and at University College, London, Forster began by studying law, but found a more suitable occupation in journalism. At twenty he had an engagement as dramatic critic for the *True Son*, and also wrote in the *Courier*, *Athenæum*, and *Examiner*, the last-named being then edited by Fonblanque, who thought highly of young Forster, and made him the chief critic on his staff. On Fonblanque's retirement in 1847, Forster succeeded him as editor of the *Examiner*; he had previously for some months edited the *Daily News*. He wrote much for periodicals

throughout his life, especially for the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviews*, his article on Steele in the latter supplying perhaps one of his best titles to literary fame ; he was also for two years editor of the *Foreign Quarterly Review*. As regards more serious work, Forster early turned his attention to biography, contributing to Lardner's *Cabinet Cyclopædia* in 1836-39 a series of "Lives of the Statesmen of the Commonwealth," including Eliot, Strafford, Pym, Hampden, Vane, Marten, and Oliver Cromwell. In later life he projected an expansion of each of these, but the larger biography of *Sir John Eliot* was the only one that was ever published. His useful *Life of Goldsmith* appeared originally in a one-volume form, profusely illustrated, in 1848, and was afterwards enlarged into the ponderous work called the *Life and Times of Goldsmith*. Perhaps even better known than the *Goldsmith* is his *Life of Charles Dickens*, with whom he had been for many years on terms of intimate friendship. He also wrote a *Life of Walter Savage Landor*, whose literary executor he was. Forster may be described as a useful, rather than an artistic, biographer. In tone and manner of writing as of speaking, he was loud and pompous, with a mighty opinion of himself and a still greater one of his friends. Besides the works already mentioned, he was the author of a volume on the *Arrest of the Five Members*, a

rather remarkable study of a period of which he had a very thorough knowledge. At his death in 1876 he was employed upon a *Life of Swift*, of which only the first volume was completed.

Among some elaborate and valuable biographies of great men of past ages which have been contributed to the literature of the present reign, we should give an important place to Carruthers's *Life of Pope*. Robert Carruthers (1799-1878) was long well known to the public of the north as the editor of the *Inverness Courier*, in which capacity we shall only say of him that it is one of the greatest qualities in an editor to be able to appreciate merit when he finds it, and that Carruthers practically discovered Hugh Miller. Considerable attention was attracted by an edition of the *Poetical Works of Alexander Pope*, contributed by him to the series called the "National Illustrated Library," to which was prefixed a memoir, afterwards enlarged and republished separately as the *Life of Alexander Pope* in 1857. This valuable work still holds the field as one of the most important contributions to our knowledge of the poet. As an editor of his works, Carruthers is rather shelved by the magnificent work commenced by the Rev. Whitwell Elwin on the lines projected by Croker, and completed by Mr. William John Courthope. Carruthers was also the principal worker in the production of

Chambers's *Cyclopædia of English Literature* and the editor of their *Household Shakespeare*.

A more important biographical contribution to the history of literature is the weighty *Life of John Milton, narrated in Connection with the Political, Ecclesiastical, and Literary History of the Time*, by David Masson, Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature in the University of Edinburgh. Professor Masson has also written a very useful popular review of *Recent British Philosophy* and other works dealing with *Chatterton, Drummond of Hawthornden, British Novelists and their Styles*, and other literary subjects; has contributed much to periodical literature, and was for some time editor of *Macmillan's Magazine*. Besides his biography he was the editor of the "Cambridge Edition" of Milton, as well as of the smaller issue of his works in the "Golden Treasury" series. While upon the subject of editions, it would be impossible not to mention the name of Alexander Dyce (1798-1869), under whose care was produced what is generally acknowledged to be the most accurate edition of Shakespeare. Dyce is also to be credited with many valuable editions of the works of the other Elizabethan dramatists. Nor should we pass over the excellent edition of Shelley put forth—as well as one of the most important and best lives of that

poet—by Mr. William Michael Rossetti, who has also brought out collections of the works of Blake, of Walt Whitman, and of his brother, Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Mr. W. M. Rossetti must also have a place among our biographers for his excellent little sketches of the *Lives of Famous Poets*, some of which had been prefixed to volumes of the series of “Moxon’s Popular Poets.” His eminence as an art critic is too well known to require further mention on our part.

Mr. John Morley, formerly known as one of our most eminent journalists and now credited with greater renown in the world of politics as one of the chief lieutenants of the Gladstonian party, and perhaps its future leader, has achieved most credit in literature by his valuable *Life of Richard Cobden*. To these should be added his works upon Voltaire, Rousseau, and Diderot, a series of able studies, in which Mr. Morley shows a regrettable tendency to the unwarrantable assumption that his readers already know something about the subject. His namesake, Professor Henry Morley, is known by a *Life of Palissy the Potter*, which made some sensation in its day, and several works on English literature. Of much higher merit from the literary point of view is the work of Sir George Otto Trevelyan, whose *Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay* is one of the few really excellent modern biographies

whose subjects are of recent date. The spirited and entertaining style of this work gives it a right to a special place in literature, independent of its historical value, which is considerable. Sir George Trevelyan is perhaps a little unjust towards his uncle's political and other opponents, but this is rather a good fault. We cannot close our notice of biographies without mentioning the late Lord Houghton's valuable *Life of Keats*, as well as his charming collection of *Mono-graphs*, a series of personal sketches, written in a lively and amusing style, and displaying much power and insight in delineation of character.

In the department of essayists and critics, recent literature has been only too fertile. Foremost among these is a writer of whose poetical powers we have already spoken, the late Matthew Arnold, whose talent has shown itself no less prominently in his prose writings. Of these the most striking are the critical essays, in which more perhaps than in any of his other writing the real genius of the writer is set before us. His style is pure, if sometimes involved, his language well chosen, though occasionally disfigured by the exhibition of a misplaced affection for polysyllables. His studies range over a wide extent of English and foreign literature, his scholarship, using the word in its least restricted sense, is profound, and his capacity of appreciating

the literature of another country from a point of view which seems almost inaccessible to a foreigner is remarkable. From our point of view, of course, it is with the manner and not the matter of his judgments that we have to deal; heaven forbid that we should be called upon to review the decrees of the latest law-giver of Parnassus as to the particular subjects of his criticism. But while we may only suggest that Arnold wrote nobly of Milton, or judiciously of Wordsworth, or treated Burns with unnecessary condescension, it is more our part to enter into his admirable studies of the nature of criticism itself. The essay on the "Study of Poetry" may be taken as a fair estimate of his views in general, and a test of their soundness. We do not refer to the masterly abstract of the history of poetry which, whatever we think of its criticism, is at least patent to all as a very remarkable study, but rather to the recommendations, the guidance, and the warnings offered to students in forming their own estimate. To take an instance, how striking and judicious is the caution against that natural instinct of the new inquirer in a field which is familiar already to so many others, to avoid the general objects of worship and set up new gods for himself—to see nothing but a sheep-like observance of tradition in the praises of recognised merit, and to drag out from the

darkness of ages the mouldering remains of some time-eaten mediocrity and call all ignorant or prejudiced who will not fall down and worship before it. Everything depends, in such a case as this, Mr. Arnold justly allows, "on the reality of a poet's classic character."

If he is a dubious classic, let us sift him; if he is a false classic, let us explode him. But if he is a real classic, if his work belongs to the class of the very best (for this is the true and right meaning of the word *classic*, *classical*), then the great thing for us is to feel and enjoy his work as deeply as ever we can, and to appreciate the wide difference between it and all work which has not the same high character.

In an age which is for ever rushing about crying "Lo, here!" and "Lo, there!" it is refreshing to come across a calm and healthy view like this. Not less sound is the moderation of the excess of such feeling as is here indicated which follows:—

True we must read our classic with open eyes and not with eyes blinded with superstition; we must perceive when his work comes short, when it drops out of the class of the very best, and we must rate it, in such cases, at its proper value. But the use of this negative criticism is not in itself, it is entirely in its enabling us to have a clearer sense and a deeper enjoyment of what is truly excellent. To trace the labour, the attempts, the weaknesses, the failures of a genuine classic, to acquaint oneself with his time and his life and his historical relationships, is mere literary dilettantism unless it has that clear sense and deeper enjoyment for its end.

These are the canons of a sound criticism, as any one can see who is not influenced in his choice of reading by that kind of instinctive dread of greatness which makes some students devote themselves exclusively to writers who they feel are not much greater than themselves. Another valuable warning is that given to the student who is for ever searching out "historic origins" for all he reads, till the main subject is absolutely dwarfed in his mind in comparison with speculation on the causes that produced it.

There is, no doubt, some fault to be found with Matthew Arnold's own criticism on the score of subtlety and over-refinement ; more objection has been made to the tone of involuntary arrogance to which a professed critic is exceedingly prone. The fault, indeed, appears to us to lie in the excessively professional air which pervades all his criticism. The writer cannot forget that he is on the bench ; his mission is to judge and to instruct, and he too often forgets that it is not given to man that other men should agree with him. It is a very natural and easy condition to slide into, and indeed if people will listen to what one says one cannot help thinking that there must really be something in it ; but it is not a very healthy feeling for a writer. In our view, Matthew Arnold's style was considerably affected by this tendency, which is apt to lead him into oracular

utterances and literary fireworks, apparently only thrown up with the object dear to the soul of the young French *déliquescant*—*pour épater le bourgeois*. This is not a noble aim, and such a master of prose as Matthew Arnold should have been above attempting so poor an expedient. On the other hand, when he only thinks of illustrating his criticism so as to bring it more home to his readers, no one shows greater skill in literary adornments. An instance strikes us of the picture called up in his mind by the lines of Wordsworth calling on "this Imperial Realm" to teach her children

The rudiments of letters, and inform
The mind with moral and religious truth.

The critic is irresistibly reminded of the effect these lines would produce if quoted at a Social Science Congress, and the whole scene rises before him.

A great room in one of our dismal provincial towns ; dusty air and jaded afternoon daylight ; benches full of men with bald heads and women in spectacles, an orator lifting up his face from a manuscript written within and without to declaim these lines of Wordsworth ; and in the soul of any poor child of nature who may have wandered in thither an unutterable sense of lamentation and mourning and woe.

This is undeniably a clever sketch, though spoiled for us by the last addition. We cannot help

thinking of the natural yearning of the honest Philistine to kick the poor child of nature into a more wholesome frame of mind, even when we are most amused at the sketch of the orator's manner. But such an untutored impulse would only be a proof of the want of appreciation of the sublime qualities of sweetness and light. Among Arnold's other prose works a prominent place should be given to his well-known treatise on *Literature and Dogma*, in which the often-slain Deity whom the world still acknowledges is again made to go down before a blow which really ought to be sufficient to destroy him.

First, in many noble literary qualities, of the essayists of our day we should hasten to pay honour to the name of Mr. Leslie Stephen. In the most purely critical, and in some sort the most charming of his works, we have all followed Mr. Stephen with delight through his *Hours in a Library*. The scholarly criticism and the grace of writing lead us on through a series of books and men, whom we know or ought to know something of, and we are astonished at the end to find how much we really do know about all of them. It cannot have been Mr. Stephen who has been telling us so much about them, for we have specially marked his reluctance to assume the airs of an instructor, and it is pleasant to think, when we have wandered through his library

with him, how profound our own knowledge really is when it has been a little refreshed by the companionship of a brother scholar. Of Mr. Stephen's great work on the *History of Thought in the Eighteenth Century* we have already spoken. The delightful sketches of Alpine adventure in his *Playground of Europe* will appeal to a wider and less instructed public: he is also honourably known as the able editor of the invaluable *Dictionary of National Biography*.

Mr. Justice (Sir James Fitzjames) Stephen, the elder brother of Mr. Leslie Stephen, and in many ways a more conspicuous figure in contemporary life, is of less importance in literature, though some of his works, chiefly on professional subjects, are of the most valuable character, and his last-published book, consisting of essays collected from the *Saturday Review*, brings him within the lines of philosophical essayists. It is perhaps awkward to add after his two distinguished sons the name of the first Sir James Stephen, some of whose sketches published in the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign, especially those of *Ecclesiastical Biography*, made a great impression on the public mind at a time when Macaulay was writing in the same periodical, the *Edinburgh Review*, his most famous essays. Few such complete proofs of what is called heredity in literary talent will be found. James

Kenneth Stephen, the son of the judge, developed strongly in a life too soon cut off for any full exhibition of his powers the same literary gift. Thus three generations bearing the same name have carried on the tradition of letters in this accomplished family.

William Rathbone Greg (1809-81) is a very distinguished member of a school to which the Stephens also belong. He was one of the chief assailants of the Christian faith in his day, and in a work entitled the *Creed of Christendom* did what was in him to make an end of that persistent doctrine which survives so many attacks. This work is another example of the tendency of such books to drop aside into corners and be no more seen after having for a moment affrighted the timid believer. Another work, *Enigmas of Life*, published in 1872, had a powerful human interest in one or two occasional passages, in which the writer let his imagination go, for instance, into speculations as to what might be a logical and reasonable "Hell," with curious power, and a strange unintentional and very striking approach to that picture of the place of despair which represents it as a place where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.

Mr. Richard Holt Hutton, joint editor of the *Spectator*, is well known as a profound and earnest thinker, whose wide reading and logical method of

reasoning have only strengthened the deeply-rooted spirit of reverence and faith which has brought comfort to many readers, bewildered by the jarring theories and loud pretensions of the leaders of a wavering multitude whose only sentiment in common is an intense credulity in everything that their fathers would not have believed. A special charm is given to the work of Mr. Hutton by his truly catholic sympathy with all that works for good, typified by his often outspoken admiration for two such different figures as those of Cardinal Newman and Dr. Martineau. Among his best-known works are the *Essays, Theological and Literary*, while his recent study of the strange character of Newman yields to none of his former efforts in truth and earnestness. Mr. Henry Reeve, editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, is the author of some valuable historical and other essays on French subjects, published in his *France before the Revolution* and *Royal and Republican France*. Mr. George Saintsbury has also done much to instruct us in the literature of France; his contributions to several of the series which have gained so much popularity of late exhibit him as one of those rarities of literature, a really thorough workman who thinks upon his subject before he writes. Mr. Philip Gilbert Hamerton, editor of the *Portfolio*, and a well-known writer on artistic subjects, has also largely contributed to make

France and England better known to each other. The pleasant and valuable sketches of *Modern Frenchmen* and the clever contrast of *French and English* come within this category. Mr. Hamerton is also, among many other works, the author of a novel *Marmorne*, which exhibits a very remarkable talent for narrative, and of one of the few readable, as well as instructive, treatises on the difficult subject of heraldry. Mr. Edmund Gosse has thrown much light upon the study of our own literature, his *Life of Congreve*, *History of Eighteenth Century Literature*, and *From Shakespeare to Pope ; an Inquiry into the Causes of the Rise of Classical Poetry in England* being among his best-known books. His knowledge of foreign authors is expressed in his *Northern Studies*, containing sketches of German, Dutch, Swedish, and Norwegian literature. Mr. Austin Dobson, of whose poetical talents we have already spoken, is the author of many sparkling prose sketches as well, and his *Life of Steele* is considered a standard authority on a much disputed subject. Mr. Andrew Lang has long been known as a pleasant writer of *vers de société*, as well as of many poems of a better aim, but his name is no less honourably known for a number of graceful essays on literary subjects which are occasionally thoughtful and almost always brilliant. The exceedingly clever *jeu d'esprit*, called the *Mark of*

Cain, a caricature of the sensational story, full of delightful extravagance perhaps too subtle for the ordinary intelligence, belongs to another section of literary work. Of his valuable *Life of Lord Iddesleigh* we have already spoken. Mr. Henry Duff Traill is another writer of pleasant prose, whose services, like those of most of the writers mentioned above, have been frequently invoked by the editors of the various series. Mr. Augustine Birrell has sprung suddenly into a remarkable degree of reputation by a volume of slight essays under the title of *Obiter Dicta*.

Among the writers of the present day we must of course not omit the illustrious name of Mr. Gladstone. But Mr. Gladstone, whose first publication—a work on *Church and State* of a rather reactionary character, written at a period before his true political opinions had been properly developed—was welcomed with applause by Macaulay, who disagreed with every line of it, has not found time among the more important occupations of his life to pursue the profession of literature, and his published works, chiefly on subjects connected with the study of Homer, are of no great importance. It is hardly necessary to say that Mr. Gladstone's English is pure and his tone scholarly, but his writings are little more than the diversions of a scholar whose avowed maxim is that the truest relaxation is found in change

of employment, and who consequently cannot afford to waste any time. He is also the author of many contributions to periodical literature.

The works of the most eminent of scholars even must be passed over as too technical for our present purpose ; antiquarians and archæologists,—a goodly company at the present day, and one that is constantly increasing,—must be noticed at more length than we can spare or not at all. We cannot afford to stray down the professional by-paths, though there are many that would be very pleasant. Yet one work of archæology made such a sensation in its day as to entitle us to take cognisance of it ; we refer to Sir Austen Henry Layard's treatise on *Nineveh and its Remains*, which, with his subsequent works on the same subject, gained a perfectly astounding popularity, considering what a recondite subject it treated. Perhaps, however, this should be regarded rather as a book of travel, the literature of which has in our day attained gigantic proportions. Unfortunately, most of our modern explorers, being naturally rather men of action than men of letters, have written more accounts than books of travel. Laurence Oliphant was a brilliant exception to this rule, his *Haifa*, *Land of Gilead*, and *Land of Khemi* being all endowed with a charm almost equal to that of *Eothen*. The

same country had been very successfully treated many years before by a contemporary of Kinglake in the *Crescent and the Cross* of Eliot Warburton (1810-52), an able man of letters, who also wrote a life of Prince Rupert and other works. Sir Richard Burton (1821-90) was another traveller who could use his pen to some purpose, the account of his journey *From Mecca to Medina* being perhaps his most successful work. The noble army of African travellers has supplied few readable books. David Livingstone, Sir Samuel Baker, Colonel Grant, and Captain Speke were great explorers, but hardly rank high among writers, and the last expedition of Mr. H. M. Stanley produced much snarling in print but no literature to speak of. Real books of travel are becoming every day a greater rarity. The few exceptions we can quote out of myriads of volumes dealing with all possible spheres and modes of travel seem generally to treat of very high localities. Perhaps the pure mountain air is more inspiring than the sun-baked plains of Central Africa. Andrew Wilson (1830-81), an Anglo-Indian journalist, was the author of a really admirable description of travel in the Himalayas under the title of the *Abode of Snow*. Less lofty heights but more adventurous climbing,—though never with such prolonged difficulties of travelling,—are recorded in the stories of Alpine adventure

which have made the name of Mr. Edward Whymper known to an extensive circle of readers. Mr. Douglas Freshfield, Secretary to the Royal Geographical Society, another Alpine explorer of high distinction, has made some valuable contributions to the same branch of literature, dealing with the little-known region of the Caucasus.

Dr. John Brown (born in 1810) is one of the writers whose fame greatly exceeds the amount of their productions. It is built upon a few sketches, scarcely a substantial volume among them ; indeed it may be said to rest almost exclusively upon the little *brochure* entitled *Rab and his Friends*, by which he is known almost wherever English is spoken. The tenderness and insight of that little book, though its hero is a dog, and the attendant figures those of a homely and aged pair without any beauty but of the heart, or romance save that subdued and profound and everlasting romance which attends the footsteps of devoted love even in the humblest tracks—has gained with scarcely a dissentient voice the interest and affection of every reader. The author had a great personal popularity wherever he went, of the same character as that gained by his book, the appreciation of all who knew him of a singularly kind and amiable nature. Of such a reputation the critic has nothing to say, book and man being equally raised above the usual

measurements and balances of literary criticism. His "Horæ Subsecivæ," including all his collected works, *Rab* among the rest, and the pretty record of little Marjorie Fleming, the wonderful child-friend of Scott, are published in three volumes, and contain a great deal of gentle thought and pleasant writing. He died in Edinburgh, of which he had been for some time one of the chief literary distinctions, in 1882.

The name of John Brown suggests another still more genial and loveable, which ought to have appeared earlier in these pages, though the difficulty of appropriating a place to Dean Ramsay is very great. His *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character* is so marked and so delightful a book that though it is not literature it cannot be omitted from any record of national literary achievements. It has been slightly called a "Joe Miller"; it is in reality a chronicle of homely humour full of the lights and shadows of life, and revealing both the simplicity and vigour of an age which is past, more clearly and brightly than any history of the country and time has ever done. Edward Bannerman Burnett Ramsay (1793-1872) himself belonged in a great part to the age which he chronicled. He was a dignitary of the old Episcopal Church of Scotland before it became, as it is now, closely identified with the Church of England, and finding its inspiration as

an organised body rather with that great institution than in the traditions appropriate to its own soil. Unpolemical, living in great charity with their neighbours, the members of this little church did more perhaps to keep alive the old-fashioned mirth, song, and sportive humour for which Scotland was once celebrated—a work which was not without its importance—than to make any strong religious impression. Dean Ramsay belonged to an old Aberdeenshire family, and enjoyed the affectionate regard of the people of Edinburgh—among whom the greater part of his life was spent—and unbounded popularity. He published one or two more serious works, among which was a volume on the *Genius and Works of Handel*, but his *Reminiscences* is the book by which his name lives.

Dr. Augustus Jessopp has long been known as a pleasant and scholarly writer on historical and archæological subjects. A volume of essays on social subjects, published a year or two ago under the fanciful title *Arcady; for Better for Worse*, was an attempt in a new line. Dr. Jessopp is also one of the most valued contributors to the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Mr. William John Loftie has also dealt chiefly with subjects of historical or topographical interest, including histories of London, Windsor, Westminster Abbey, etc. Among the most

attractive of his smaller works is a delightful little life of Queen Anne's Son, the poor little Duke of Gloucester. Mr. Loftie was editor of Messrs. Macmillan's "Art at Home" series, and has contributed much to other series and to periodical literature. The Rev. Alfred John Church, Professor of Latin at University College, London, has earned his chief repute among scholars by his admirable editions and translations of Tacitus (in collaboration with the Rev. W. T. Brodribb): but his reproductions of classical stories for the less erudite, *Stories from Homer*, *Stories from Virgil*, *Stories from the Greek Tragedians*, have earned him a wider popularity. Professor Church made a special department of his own in literature with his historical tales for boys, of which *With the King at Oxford*, a story of the great civil war, and *To the Lions! a Tale of the Early Church*, may be quoted as among the best examples.

A noticeable feature of the latter part of the age is the rise and popularity of a number of series of literary works, little books in many cases expounding a large subject, in which a great deal of information has been provided in a small space for the advantage of readers who have not much time or industry for study at first hand. We need not instance the "Epochs of Ancient and of Modern History," which are rather of the class of

educational handbooks. The first series which attracted attention as works of literature was that of the "Ancient Classics" published by Messrs. Blackwood, under the able guidance of the late Rev. W. Lucas Collins, a writer of great knowledge and much enthusiasm for the great writers whom he expounded for the benefit of the unlearned. The series was so popular that it was followed by a second, devoted to the same subjects, and the idea was afterwards developed by the same publishers into one embracing "Foreign Classics," and another "Philosophical Classics." The latter is still going on. Messrs. Macmillan followed some time afterwards with a series of "English Men of Letters," under the editorship of Mr. John Morley, which has produced many admirable essays and biographies of the great writers of the three kingdoms. "Men of Action," "Great Statesmen," and several others followed. There is a "Citizen Series" treating constitutional subjects, and the idea has now been carried out in so great a number of varieties that it is difficult to follow them out in all their branches. The tendency of these books to impart knowledge with as little trouble as possible to the reader is partly good and partly prejudicial. They are apt to produce that smattering of knowledge which pretends to be much more than it is, and are largely used for the "cram" which

is much more general than study. At the same time it is perhaps better to know something of Theocritus or Dante or Bacon than to gape at them as mere names, distant stars in the firmament conveying little or no meaning to the mind—and it is conceivable that even that knowledge at second hand might inspire a mind worthy of it to greater exertions and better things.

It is wholly impossible for the most industrious pen to record the number of writers of good abilities and ready literary gifts who contribute and have contributed to the periodicals of the time, sometimes ably and with insight, and with an extraordinarily good level of literary skill and workmanship. In the last chapter of this book an attempt will be made to trace the great development of the Press, and the many journals, magazines, and periodicals of all kinds which have come into existence during the later part of our age ; but to cope with the immeasurable array of writers is beyond our skill. Their name is legion, and to the credit of our time and age it must be recorded that the greater number of them work in a manful and honest spirit, and that the corruption which existed in former times, the flattery of a patron, the indiscriminate partisanship which had no opinion but that of its employer, is very little known among them. There

is a class of purveyors of gossip and personalities copied from the American, for whom little can be said : but it is fortunately unnecessary to speak of them at all.

CHAPTER VIII

OF THE LEADING PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS OF THE VICTORIAN ERA

IT is a common thing to hear said in our day that people read nothing but the magazines. There has indeed been such an extraordinary increase in our own time of periodical publications that we can imagine the conscientious student of the literature of the day hardly finding time to work his way through all the latest numbers in the space of a month, while a margin of leisure for looking at books would be to such a person a complete impossibility. It has, indeed, always been a standing mystery to us where the constantly increasing recruits of this noble army find any readers at all, and we have sometimes thought that the real cause of the constant multiplication might be that nobody in the present day feels called upon to read, while every one attempts to write, and desires to see him or herself in print.

The pages of the last new cheap magazine, however precarious its existence and doubtful its future, offer to the misunderstood genius an asylum at least as honourable and as lucrative as the waste-paper basket of the *Nineteenth Century*. There is possibly here an explanation of the mystery. For our purpose, however, it will be sufficient to give a glance at some of the chief periodicals of the day without attempting to throw a light upon the innumerable trivialities of this description which can hardly be called literature at all.

We have already recorded the origin of some of the older magazines which in most cases still exist. The three old quarterlies are still to the fore, and have still their public, though the immense competition of the monthly magazines has done much to impair their position. The *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly*, however, retain most of their prestige; the *Westminster* has perhaps of late fallen rather into the background. There are other magazines which are also published quarterly, but these are for the most part of a more or less technical kind. The *Church Quarterly*, for instance, is intended for Church of England readers, while the old-established but now defunct *British Quarterly* was the organ of the Nonconformists; the *Asiatic Quarterly* is of special interest to Anglo-Indians, the *Historical Review* to students of history,

and the *Classical Review* to scholars. But few if any of these are of first rate importance to the general public. The quarterly form has been decided to be too cumbrous for ordinary use, and the most serious and substantial magazines are now thrust upon an unwilling world every month. Three of these, in particular, which have been established in the last quarter of a century appear so much more akin to the old quarterlies than to any other form of periodical that we must speak of them before their contemporaries.

The first of these was due to the philanthropic enterprise of that goodly fellowship who had sounded the very depths of knowledge and convinced themselves that nothing could possibly exist beyond the reach of their plumb-line. The public, they decided, lacked instruction ; it required to be told, and told over and over again, that its commonly received beliefs were out of date and must be given up forthwith on pain of the displeasure of science. For this purpose the *Fortnightly Review* was started in 1865 under the editorship of George Lewes, a very appropriate leader for such an enterprise, whose mantle fell some two years later upon the expectant shoulders of Mr. John Morley. The new periodical was to be Liberal in politics and agnostic where religious questions were concerned ; it was at first published, as the title implied, every fortnight, but the

inconvenience of this method was soon obvious, and it became a monthly magazine. The *Fortnightly* has always kept up a high standard of ability in writing ; on Mr. Morley's resignation of the editorship in 1882 it passed into the hands of Mr. Thomas Hay Sweet Escott, who relinquished it a few years later to the present able editor, Mr. Frank Harris, who has introduced a new and striking feature into the magazine by some remarkable short stories from his own pen. A rival to the *Fortnightly* was started a year after the appearance of the latter in the *Contemporary Review*, which was to be conducted on the same political lines but differed from it in having a religious basis, and was indeed chiefly intended to counteract the secularist teaching of the *Fortnightly*. The first editor was no less a person than Dean Alford, who was succeeded in 1870 by Mr. James Knowles. Seven years later, after a change of ownership, Mr. Knowles found himself unable to conduct the *Contemporary* in the free and unbiassed spirit which he considered necessary, and, resigning his post, set up a magazine of his own, the *Nineteenth Century*, which, as many of his old contributors followed him in his secession, sprang at once into an important position which it has never since lost. In the direction of the *Contemporary* Mr. Knowles was succeeded by the present editor, Mr. Percy Bunting. The three

magazines mentioned are now conducted in a generally impartial spirit and are glad to include all contributions on important subjects from whatever point of view they may be written. In the same connection may be mentioned the *National Review*, started as an exponent of Conservative principles in 1883 under the joint editorship of Mr. W. J. Courthope and Mr. Alfred Austin.

Of the older style of monthly magazines which were in vogue before the world became so alarmingly serious, we find a great number in circulation at the commencement of the reign. Besides *Blackwood* and *Fraser*, of which we have already spoken, and which held a much higher position than the rest, there were the *Old Monthly Magazine*, then conducted by James Grant, the *New Monthly*, edited by Theodore Hook, whose predecessors in this office had been Campbell and Bulwer, the *Metropolitan Magazine*, edited by Captain Marryat, and many others which have long disappeared. *Blackwood* still survives, as vigorous as ever though having recently passed its seventy-fifth birthday, and is remarkable for the unshaken consistency of its political opinions,—which are still virtually those of Wilson and Lockhart—and also as almost the last really literary magazine. *Fraser* has been less successful. Its first brilliant days did not last very

long and its subsequent fortunes were fluctuating. In the hands of Mr. Froude it renewed for a while its early prosperity, but under the editorship of his successor, William Allingham, fell to a very low ebb indeed. Messrs. Longman, the latest proprietors, made a valiant attempt to bolster it up, appointing as editor Principal Tulloch, under whose charge it improved for a while, but not for long. In 1882 *Fraser* was definitely discontinued and *Longman's Magazine* set up in its place. The editorship of the latter periodical, like that of *Blackwood*, is retained in the hands of the firm. Another periodical of some importance started in the year of Her Majesty's accession, *Bentley's Miscellany*, of which Charles Dickens and Ainsworth were successively editors—the latter becoming many years later its proprietor—only survives as incorporated with *Temple Bar*, a much younger publication, started in 1861 under the editorship of Mr. George Augustus Sala. The mention of the latter recalls to our mind an ill-starred contemporary with a sort of kindred title, the *St. Paul's Magazine*, started in 1863 and edited by Anthony Trollope, which, however, had only a very brief existence. A more recent fiasco was seen in the case of *Murray's Magazine*, founded in 1887 under the guidance of Mr. Edward Arnold, afterwards succeeded by Mr. W. L. Courtney, which, though ably conducted and full

of good matter, has not succeeded in living beyond its fifth year.

Without, however, bewailing the fate of heroes gone to Hades, we can point to many excellent periodicals which the course of time has only strengthened. *Macmillan's Magazine* dates from the year 1859 when Mr. David Masson first introduced it to the world. It was subsequently conducted with great ability for many years by Sir George Grove, and later by Mr. John Morley, the present editor being Mr. Mowbray Morris, son of the well-known manager of the *Times*, and himself the author—in collaboration with the Duke of Beaufort—of the volume on *Hunting* in the Badminton Series. *Macmillan* has always been remarkable for correct taste and refinement of style, though occasionally perhaps a little too academic in tone for the general reader. Messrs. Macmillan are also the publishers of the *English Illustrated Magazine*, a praiseworthy effort in a department of literature in which England has not greatly distinguished itself. We fear that we shall have to wait some time longer before we can produce a rival to the excellent illustrated magazines of America. The magazines which devote themselves entirely to art fall into a different category, and have not much to do with literature. The *Art Journal*, founded in 1839 by Samuel Carter Hall, the *Portfolio*, established thirty years

later by Mr. Philip Gilbert Hamerton, and the yet newer *Magazine of Art* are the leaders of this class.

The *Cornhill Magazine* made its first appearance in the same year as *Macmillan*, Thackeray being the first editor. He did not prove so good an editor as was expected, chiefly from the excessive goodness of heart which made the rejection of a contribution a pain and a terror to him. A sterner, and, perhaps, a generally abler rule was established by his son-in-law, Mr. Leslie Stephen, who edited the magazine from 1871 to 1882, when he relinquished this duty for the more arduous task of superintending the *Dictionary of National Biography*. His successor was the brilliant novelist and essayist, Mr. James Payn, who still holds the post of editor. Among other magazines an important position is held, even outside its own circle, by *Good Words*, an illustrated religious periodical of which the late Dr. Norman Macleod was the first editor, and which is still conducted by his brother, Dr. Donald Macleod. Of newer publications we can only speak charily, as Heaven knoweth what their future may prove. The *New Review*, edited by Mr. Archibald Grove, a kind of cheap miniature copy of the heavier monthlies, has met with much applause and some success. A newer venture, the *Strand*, a profusely illustrated sixpenny magazine, which chiefly lives

upon translations from foreign languages, also deserves honourable mention.

The growth of the newspaper press in the present age offers a much larger and more complicated subject, with which our space will not allow us to deal at any length. At the commencement of the reign we find five morning papers in circulation, the *Times*, *Morning Chronicle*, *Morning Herald*, *Morning Post*, and *Morning Advertiser*, and four evening, the *Sun*, *Courier*, *Globe*, and *Evening Standard*. Outside the metropolis a daily paper was unknown, and the price of the majority of the London dailies was as high as sevenpence. It must be remembered that the press was then weighed down by a threefold taxation, which, though it had recently been considerably reduced, was still sufficiently heavy. There was a tax of three half-pence in the pound (weight) on every kind of paper, a duty of eighteenpence on every advertisement, and a compulsory penny stamp which must be affixed to every copy of a newspaper. The reading public under these conditions was a limited one, the poorer classes usually confining themselves to their turn of a public-house copy, or feeding on some of the piratical, unstamped prints, which generally managed to keep on a precarious, Ishmaelitic kind of existence in defiance of the

law, and which too often provided a very unhealthy kind of literature. Even the leading metropolitan papers were very deficient—in days before the telegraph—in foreign or even provincial intelligence, and it was considered a remarkable achievement when a report of an after-dinner speech at Glasgow appeared in a London paper on the next morning but one after it was delivered. Nor was the writing exactly of the style which would find favour in our days, to judge by some specimens of the amenities of journalism given in Mr. Fox Bourne's *English Newspapers*.

The *Times*, on June 16, 1832, called the *Standard* a "stupid and priggish print which never by any chance deviates into candour"; and on August 22 in the same year the *Standard* talked of the "filthy falsehood and base insinuation put forward by the *Times*." The *Times* on one occasion described the *Chronicle* as "that squirt of filthy water," and the *Morning Post* was in the judgment of the *Chronicle*, "that slop-pail of corruption." The *Courier* was according to the *Morning Herald*, "that spavined old hack," and the *Globe* was according to the *Standard*, "our blubber-headed contemporary."

Most of these compliments were exchanged between professed political adversaries, as the *Morning Herald*, *Morning Post*, and *Standard* were Tory organs, and the *Chronicle* and *Globe* Liberal. The *Times* had no fixed opinions beyond the general belief that there was only one John Walter (at a time) and that Thomas

Barnes was (at the date of writing) his prophet ; while, as Mr. Fox Bourne has neglected to give an exact date, it is impossible to say what the politics of the *Courier* may have been.

The first newspaper that calls for our attention then as now is naturally the *Times*, though in those days it occupied a much more unapproachable position than it does now. The *Times* was already of a respectable antiquity at the beginning of the reign, having been started in 1785 by John Walter I.—grandfather of the present proprietor—under the title of the *Daily Universal Register*, which was changed to the present one three years later. The rise of the *Times* was rapid, especially in the hands of the second John Walter, son of the founder, who took up the reins of government in 1803. In 1837 it was generally regarded as the leading journal of Europe, and its editor, Thomas Barnes (1786-1841), was described as the most powerful man in the country by no less an authority than Lord Lyndhurst. Barnes's chief supporter at the time was Captain Edward Sterling—"Captain Whirlwind," as Carlyle called him, "a remarkable man and playing a remarkable part in the world,"—father of John Sterling of whom we have already spoken. The *Times* was at this time in opposition—though it then as now retained a perfect independence of action, professing rather to reflect the feeling of the nation than to

follow any particular party—and being very ably written was a thorn in the side of Lord Melbourne's government. It had already, besides being the most important medium of advertisement, a special reputation as the great purveyor of news, which the energy and ability of John Walter II. had amply earned for it. A single instance may be given to show the difficulty in obtaining news in those days and the power of the head of a newspaper. It had been the custom for the *Times* representative to meet the mail-boats from Egypt at Marseilles in order to receive the packet for Printing-house Square at once and post across France with it to despatch it to London. An article in that journal having, however, given offence at Paris in 1845, the extraordinarily pig-headed government of Louis Philippe revenged themselves on the *Times* messenger, who was detained in Paris on the plea of some informality in his passport. Walter was equal to the occasion and at once took measures for doing without French help. In future, an emissary of his boarded the mail steamer at Suez, received the *Times* consignment, and set off at once on a swift dromedary for Alexandria, where he found Lieutenant Waghorn,—the originator of the overland route, who had been pressed into the service,—awaiting him with another steamer which immediately started for an Austrian port on the

Adriatic, from whence the packet was transmitted by the shortest routes to Ostend and London. Enraged at the discovery that the *Times* was still the first to publish news from the East, the French ministers now offered special facilities to the *Morning Herald*, who, by their aid, succeeded on one occasion in being ahead of their contemporary. The estrangement between the governments of Paris and Printing-House Square had, however, led to a *rapprochement* between the latter and the cabinet of Vienna, and, Austrian state aid being offered to Walter, he was again the first in the field. The stars in their courses seemed to fight for the *Times*, the Marseilles packet being repeatedly detained by storms in the Mediterranean, while Walter's ship steamed placidly up the Adriatic. At last, however, the quarrel was made up, and the *Times* intelligence was conveyed *via* Marseilles as before. It is worthy of mention that the *Morning Chronicle* and *Post* were by a subsequent arrangement admitted to share in the news conveyed by the *Times* expresses, but the *Morning Herald* was excluded. On the starting of the *Daily News* the latter clubbed with the *Herald* for its intelligence; but the older newspapers, who were being under-sold by the newcomer, succeeded in breaking this alliance by offering the *Herald* a much cheaper share in their own system—a somewhat

disreputable bargain which bore very heavily on the new paper. Some twelve years later in 1858 Baron Reuter's system of agencies supplied Continental intelligence with equal quickness, accuracy, and cheapness to all. It is remarkable that Baron Reuter—who had been a state courier in the service of the Prussian Government, and had thus established relations in all European capitals—met with a very hesitating reception at first. The *Times* rejected his offer on the broad ground that they always found they could do a thing better themselves than any one else could do it for them, and the *Morning Advertiser*, followed by the other papers, only gave a conditional assent, but the experiment succeeded so wonderfully that even the *Times* soon gave in.

Barnes died in 1841, and for his successor was chosen, strangely as it appeared, a young man of twenty-four who had only been two years connected with the paper, John Thaddeus Delane (1817-79). But John Walter knew no part of his business more thoroughly than the choosing of his officers, and the selection was afterwards recognised on all hands to have been a singularly happy one. Under Delane the *Times* reached the highest position it ever occupied, and became, as even so hostile a critic as Mr. Fox Bourne admits, the "most prosperous and influential paper in the world." Much of its success was, however,

undoubtedly as much due to the ability and energy of the proprietor. The second John Walter died in 1847 and was succeeded by his son, "the third of that victorious name," who is still at the head of affairs in Printing-house Square. The politics of the *Times* were usually Tory during the early part of the reign, but it was strongly in favour of the repeal of the corn laws, and on Lord John Russell coming into office in 1846 gave a general support to his government. So important was its support considered that on the editor of the *Morning Chronicle*—an old-established Liberal paper—complaining that the *Times* got as much special government information as he did, Lord John practically admitted that he dared not risk the defection of the latter journal. In 1854 the *Times* had actually a circulation nine times larger than that of the *Morning Advertiser*, the daily paper with the next largest sale. But the removal of the taxation from which all newspapers then suffered brought about a change in this respect. The advertisement tax was abolished in 1853, the newspaper stamp in 1855, and the excise on paper in 1858. Most existing papers lowered their price at once and hosts of new ones sprang up, especially in the provinces. The *Times* actually lost by the abolition of the stamp, as it was on account of its great size and weight specially excluded, at the suggestion of Mr.

Gladstone, from the new regulations as to the postage of newspapers. Nevertheless the *Times* showed greater activity than ever at this period, practically inaugurating the system of war correspondence, which has grown so immensely since then, by sending out Dr. William Howard Russell specially to the Crimea, while Thomas Chenery represented them at Constantinople. The many short-comings of the government officials with regard to supplies were pitilessly exposed by the *Times* till the ministers were obliged to engage Hayward to answer its attacks in the *Chronicle* with ingenious pleas that,—as Fonblanque scornfully said,—it was the fault of the *Times* that the soldiers were sick and starving. Delane himself went out to the Crimea to test his lieutenant's reports and put their accuracy beyond doubt; he was also the means of starting a fund for the sick and wounded which soon reached £20,000.

Delane remained at his post as editor till 1877, when he resigned, dying two years afterwards quite worn out with his work. He was succeeded by Thomas Chenery (1826-84), who had long served the *Times* as a contributor, but was best known to the outer world as a distinguished Orientalist. On Chenery's death he was succeeded by the present editor, Mr. George Earle Buckle. The last noticeable incident in the history of the paper is that of the famous articles on "Parnellism

and Crime," which formed the occasion of the Parnell Commission. In these articles had been published facsimiles of letters purporting to be written by Mr. Parnell which, however, proved to be impudent forgeries, palmed off upon the *Times* by a rascal named Pigott. Many of the allegations contained in "Parnellism and Crime" were declared by the Commission to have been fully proved, but the publication, however innocent, of the forged letters was a grievous injury to Mr. Parnell for which the *Times* subsequently paid heavy damages.

We have gone at length into the history of the *Times* as giving a specimen of the life of a newspaper, our space not permitting us to speak of each leading journal with the same detail. Perhaps the most important paper, next to the *Times*, at the commencement of our period, was the great Liberal organ, the *Morning Chronicle*. Having made its first appearance as early as 1769, the *Chronicle* was the oldest paper of the day and had recollections of a glorious past behind it, when Coleridge, Hazlitt and Mackintosh, Thomas Campbell, the poet, and John Campbell, the lawyer, had been among its contributors. The editor in 1837 was a Scotsman, John Black (1783-1855), who was highly thought of in the newspaper world and enjoyed the confidence of Lord Melbourne, then prime minister; and the

paper was so successful that an attempt was made to start an affiliated *Evening Chronicle* with George Hogarth, musical critic of the *Chronicle*, as editor. Dickens, then a parliamentary reporter for the *Chronicle*, contributed some "Sketches by Boz" to the evening paper, but it was not a success and the publication was soon stopped. Some years later, in 1843, Andrew Doyle, the foreign editor, married the daughter of the proprietor, Sir John Easthope, and the affectionate father thought to make a provision for her by turning Black adrift at a moment's notice and putting Doyle into his place. Black who had toiled for twenty years in the service of the *Chronicle* and the Liberal party,—steadily refusing Lord Melbourne's repeated offers of promotion till the latter in despair gave a baronetcy to Easthope instead—was left penniless and was obliged to sell his library to secure a small annuity for his remaining years. The *Chronicle* did not prosper under Doyle's direction, and was sold by Sir John Easthope in 1848 to a Peelite syndicate, of which the Duke of Newcastle was one member and, we believe, Mr. Gladstone another. John Douglas Cook, a journalist of great ability and experience, was appointed editor, and Thackeray, Hayward, and Sir William Harcourt were among the contributors. It was conducted on Peelite and High Church lines and was at first a very

valuable party organ, but it again declined, and was sold in 1854 to Mr. Sergeant Glover, who employed it as an instrument for puffing Napoleon III. (value received). He also revived the *Evening Chronicle* for a while but without success. The *Morning Chronicle* perished miserably in 1862.

The *Morning Post*, the oldest of existing metropolitan papers, having been founded in 1772, was of little account at the beginning of the reign. It had had its day of importance at the beginning of the century under Daniel Stuart's vigorous management, when Coleridge was its editor and Charles Lamb among its contributors, but had gradually sunk to the position of a mere chronicler of fashionable intelligence. Its rehabilitation has been almost entirely due to the immense exertions of its present proprietor, Sir Algernon Borthwick, who has now directed its affairs for more than forty years. With the exception of a period during which it was the organ of Lord Palmerston, the *Morning Post* has been a consistent Tory paper. It has been the first among newspapers to give systematic reports of plays and concerts and the last to lower its price. The *Morning Herald*, founded in 1780 by "the gay and gallant Parson Bate," formerly editor of the *Morning Post*, was also a Tory, or rather Conservative organ—though that name had

not yet been invented at the commencement of our period—and had no very glorious history. It was bought in 1843 by Edward Baldwin, whose son, Charles Baldwin, was proprietor of the *Standard*—an evening paper started in 1828 to oppose the Catholic claims, which, under the joint editorship of Drs. Giffard and Maginn, had had a period of excessive brilliancy. The Baldwins were men of enterprise, and spent much money on their newspapers, but apparently without much judgment. The father died and, the son becoming bankrupt, both papers were bought in 1848 by James Johnson, in whose hands matters quickly assumed a different appearance. He started the *Standard* as a morning as well as evening paper, reducing its price to twopence—and in 1858 to one penny—and kept the *Herald* at its old price of fourpence to prevent any clashing between the two. Johnson even started an *Evening Herald* at the same price, but it did not pay, and even the *Morning Herald* disappeared in 1869. Great fun used to be made by rival papers out of the connection of the *Herald* and the *Standard*, especially in the Baldwin days, and the *Times* nicknamed them Mrs. Gamp and Mrs. Harris. At his death in 1876, Johnson left the *Standard*, which had already greatly improved, to the present editor, Mr. William Heseltine Mudford—son of William Mudford, who was at one time

editor of the *Courier*—with absolute and undivided power of management. Mr. Mudford has fully justified the confidence reposed in him by his able predecessor, the paper having under his guidance steadily progressed in importance and position for the last fifteen years. Ministers have repeatedly borne testimony in Parliament to the accuracy of its intelligence, and its conduct as the exponent of an enlightened and independent Conservatism has won the respect of all parties. Moderate Liberals and Conservatives alike are willing to accept as their organ the *Standard*, which probably represents more educated opinion than any other daily paper.

The *Morning Advertiser* is a paper of a class by itself. Started in 1792 by the Licensed Victuallers' Association, who made it a condition of membership that every publican should take it in—in return for obtaining a share in a benefit fund depending on its profits—the *Advertiser* became at once in the days of high-priced literature, when the public read the papers chiefly at public-houses, an absolutely unapproachable medium for tradesmen's advertisements. It was, however, little more than a trade organ till 1850, when the late James Grant (1805-79) was appointed editor. In his hands the *Advertiser* became an important Liberal organ, till the day when the Liberal party began to attack an

organisation which had till then faithfully supported it. The Licensed Victuallers were swift to resent the assault; James Grant was superseded as editor by Alfred Bate Richards, formerly editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, and the *Advertiser* has since been in bitter opposition to the party who put greater confidence in the support of the teetotal organisations.

Of the evening papers the *Sun* had been started in 1792 under the auspices of William Pitt, and was naturally proud of its parentage. After having been Tory in its youth, it had developed into Liberalism under the rule of Murdo Young, who greatly improved it in many ways. But its history in the present reign was not remarkable. Though it supported various Liberal governments with the utmost loyalty, it gained little profit thereby. In 1850 Young became bankrupt, and the paper was bought by Mr. Charles Kent, who continued to edit it, without making any great noise in the world, till its decease twenty years later. The *Courier* had once been a leading paper, for which Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Charles Lamb had written, but it was on its last legs in 1837. It had changed management and politics two or three times recently, and in 1837 was being conducted as a Liberal journal by Laman Blanchard, but it was shortly afterwards sold over his head to a

Tory proprietor, who buried it decently some years later. A plant of a hardier growth was the *Globe*, a thriving Whig organ, which had originally been set up in 1802, together with a short-lived morning paper called the *British Press*, by a syndicate of booksellers who wished to revenge themselves on Daniel Stuart, then proprietor of the *Morning Post* and *Courier*, for the arrogant manner in which he treated them and their advertisements. Many smaller publications—the *Traveller*,¹ the *English Statesman*, the *True Briton*, the *Nation*, the *Argus*, etc.—had been already absorbed by the *Globe*, which under the able management of Colonel Robert Torrens (1780-1864)—formerly an officer of Marines, who had served with distinction in the Danish and Peninsular wars—became a recognised mouthpiece of Liberal governments. The quality of literature it provided was, for a considerable time, heightened by the contributions of "Father Prout." The reign of Torrens coming to an end after a period of some thirty years, the *Globe* began to lose ground, and, changing hands in 1869, became the exponent of a moderate Conservative policy. It is now, like the *Evening Standard*, chiefly valued as a purveyor of late news.

Of later journalistic enterprises none has been

¹ The full title of the *Globe* ever since this amalgamation has been the *Globe and Traveller*.

more remarkable or more successful than the *Daily News*. The principal agent in its foundation was undoubtedly Charles Dickens. It is said that he had offered some of his "Pictures from Italy" to the *Morning Chronicle*, and that the latter had declined them on the score of expense, whereupon Dickens, out of pique, persuaded Messrs. Bradbury and Evans to start a rival to the (then) leading Liberal paper. We have seen no solid proof of this somewhat unworthy charge against the great novelist, but the latest historian of the press apparently believes it. Anyhow, the *Daily News* was started, with much blowing of trumpets, in 1845, as an independent Liberal paper, with Dickens as editor, supported by William Henry Wills and Frederick Knight Hunt as sub-editors. Dickens was a man of great versatility, and one of the few instances of a great writer (of books) who was also a good reporter, but it does not appear that he was as good a leader-writer as he believed himself to be, and even John Forster thought he would make a bad editor. Forster was right; Dickens not only proved a careless editor, but he very soon grew weary of the little he did in that line and handed over his duties to Forster, who, it must be admitted, did not improve matters much. Forster resigned in a few years, and was succeeded by Frederick Knight Hunt, and the *Daily News*, having now

thrown its literary ballast overboard, began to ride a little easier. Still there was much left to be desired, but the paper prospered more after Hunt's death in 1854, under the successive editorship of William Weir and Thomas Walker. Its halcyon days perhaps commenced with the editorship of Mr. Frank Harrison Hill in 1870. In this year the Franco-German War broke out, and the *Daily News* fairly beat its contemporaries in the department of war correspondence. This was chiefly due to the energy and ability of Mr. Archibald Forbes, the special correspondent with the German army, while Mr. Henry Labouchere's *Diary of a Besieged Resident in Paris* interested even those who most condemned its taste. The *Daily News* claims to have stood at the head of the list in the matter of war correspondence ever since, but this we are not inclined to allow, the spirit of competition having raised this department in every leading paper to a high level of excellence. It is rather a ghastly kind of competition in some ways if we judge by its results. The memory of our Soudan campaigns alone shows how Mr. O'Donovan of the *Daily News* perished in the desert in the rout of Hicks Pasha's army, Mr. Cameron of the *Standard* and Mr. Herbert of the *Morning Post* were killed at Abu Klea or Gakdul, and Mr. Power of the *Times* was murdered with Colonel Stewart on an

island in the Nile. These are not all the victims of the Egyptian wars alone, but they may serve to give some idea of the risks men have to face to let us have something to read at breakfast.

In 1886 Mr. Frank Hill, whose Radicalism was apparently not sufficiently robust to please his owners, was dismissed as summarily as John Black was from the *Chronicle*, after as faithful service, if for a shorter term. He was succeeded for a short time by Mr. H. W. Lucy ("Toby, M.P."), since whose resignation the *Daily News* has been edited by Mr. John Richard Robinson, who had ably filled the post of manager for many years. The *Daily News* is the chief morning paper professing the doctrines of the Gladstonian Liberals. Almost as successful an enterprise was that of the *Daily Telegraph*, started in 1855 by Colonel Sleigh on Liberal lines with Thornton Hunt, son of Leigh Hunt, as editor. The first proprietor failed, and the paper came into the hands of the printer, Joseph Levy, who took the very bold step of issuing it at a penny instead of twopence, an experiment never tried with a daily paper before. It paid, however, and the new journal, which numbered a very able staff, among whom Mr.—now Sir—Edwin Arnold, of whom we have already spoken, and Mr. George Augustus Sala were and still are prominent, came rapidly to the front. The *Daily Telegraph* has

altered little in its life of nearly forty years, though its politics have not been always consistent, and it has incurred some ridicule by its inflated style, and the occasionally too vivid imagination of its correspondents. A less successful venture was the *Morning Star*, founded in 1856 to set forth the doctrines of the Manchester School. It was an unfortunate moment, for John Bull—though he likes to have peace preached to him as a point of Christian morality when all is quiet—gets impatient of moralising if there is a fight going on in which he feels the natural heathen desire to take part. The *Morning Star*, with an affiliated *Evening Star*, was cleverly written, Mr. Justin M'Carthy and Mr. John Morley being successively editors, but it was too flagrantly unpatriotic for the times, and, after a hard struggle for life, died a natural death in 1869. Passing over other abortive attempts at morning papers, we have still to record the birth of the *Daily Chronicle*, originally founded merely as a commercial medium under the name of the *Business and Agency Gazette* in 1855, taking its place as the first local London paper in the same year as the *Clerkenwell News*, and finally, after several vicissitudes, becoming known to the world at large under its present title in 1877. The politics of the *Daily Chronicle* are fluctuating; it is at present the organ of the so-called Labour party.

The evening papers have also grown considerably in numbers of late years. The most remarkable experiment was made in this line in 1865 by Mr. George Smith, the well-known publisher, in imitation of the paper started by Captain Shandon in *Pendennis*, with a publication called after that in the novel, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, "a paper written by gentlemen for gentlemen." The editor chosen was Mr. Frederick Greenwood, and the first distinct success scored by the new venture was through an article by that gentleman's brother, Mr. James Greenwood, containing his experiences in a casual ward to which he had gained admittance in disguise. The *Pall Mall* soon gathered a very brilliant staff of able writers, and became so successful that Mr. Smith even tried in 1870 the experiment of bringing it out as a morning paper, but this not unnaturally failed. Its politics were at first of a high-class Liberal type though quite independent of party, but it gradually diverged from Mr. Gladstone as that statesman inclined more and more towards the Radical wing of his party, and after the Russo-Turkish War became distinctly Conservative. This caused a coolness between owner and editor, and when the paper passed in 1880 into the hands of Mr. Smith's son-in-law, Mr. Henry Yates Thompson, a change of editor became a necessity. Mr. Greenwood was superseded by Mr. John Morley,

who continued to carry on the paper with ability, though the same level of literary merit was hardly kept up, till his resignation in 1883, when he was succeeded by Mr. William Thomas Stead, formerly editor of the Darlington *Northern Echo*. Mr. Stead's editorship of the *Pall Mall* was marked by one great blot which will be in the memory of all our readers, upon which it is not necessary to insist. The present editor is Mr. Edward Tyas Cook.

Meanwhile Mr. Greenwood had started, on his own account, a rival to the *Pall Mall*, exactly resembling that newspaper (in its old form) under the title of the *St. James's Gazette*, which, as he was assisted by some of the ablest of his old colleagues, for some time effectively outshone its older contemporary. The two exist placidly side by side now, the *St. James's* perhaps aiming most at keeping up the old standard of literary excellence, while the *Pall Mall* attracts a new class of readers by extensive "personal" intelligence. Mr. Greenwood resigned the direction of the former some years ago, and was succeeded by its present editor, Mr. Sidney Low. Of other evening papers it is unnecessary to do more than mention the *Echo*, a half-penny Liberal paper, started by Messrs. Cassell in 1868, whose first editor was Mr. Arthur Arnold, or its Conservative rival, the *Evening News*, founded only in 1881.

More important is the *Star*, a Home Rule organ, which was established in 1887 by Mr. Thomas Power O'Connor, M.P., and sprang at once into an immense circulation, mainly due, it is said, to the excellence of its sporting articles.

We have only spoken so far of the metropolitan daily press. Into the extensive and important department of English provincial, Scotch, and Irish journalism our space will not permit us to enter, but a few words may be said with regard to some of the leading papers. Forty years ago, before the repeal of the "taxes on knowledge," there was not a single daily paper published out of London; indeed the greater number of the provincial dailies, with the exception of quite the most recent, were originally published weekly. The really important provincial press of England is naturally to be found at some distance from London where the metropolitan papers cannot be had early in the day, and the manufacturing towns of the north supply those of the highest class, the newspapers of Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, and Sheffield ranking very little below the London dailies. The most important of these are Liberal in politics, and the greater number of them have taken up Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule scheme. Some are of great antiquity, the *Leeds Mercury*, the principal Liberal paper of Yorkshire,

dating from 1718,¹ and the *Newcastle Chronicle*, the organ of Mr. Joseph Cowen, formerly M.P. for Newcastle, from 1764. Other important Liberal organs in the north are the *Sheffield Independent* (1819), the *Manchester Guardian* (1821), perhaps the most influential paper published out of London, the *Liverpool Mercury* (1811), and the *Liverpool Daily Post* (1865). The Conservative party are not, however, behind-hand in the competition, and can muster some excellent organs to fight against those we have mentioned, such as the *Yorkshire Post* (Leeds), started in 1754, the *Liverpool Courier* (1808), *Manchester Courier* (1825), and *Newcastle Journal* (1832). Further south at Birmingham the leading position is naturally occupied by the excellent Liberal Unionist organ the *Birmingham Daily Post* (1857); the *Birmingham Daily Gazette* (1862) ranks almost equally high among the provincial journals of the Conservative party. It is singular, considering the number of literary celebrities who are found in the Liberal Unionist ranks, that the success of that party in journalism is so small out of London. The *Manchester Examiner* (1846),—once a Radical paper of great

¹ We believe the very oldest paper in Her Majesty's dominions to be the *Lincoln, Rutland, and Stamford Mercury*, published at Stamford. The first number appeared in 1695, so that if it lives three years longer, this paper will attain the extraordinary age of two hundred.

merit,—has indeed been recently purchased by a Liberal Unionist syndicate, but it is far from occupying its old position. The *Scotsman* in Edinburgh, and the *Northern Whig* at Belfast, seem, with the exception of the *Birmingham Daily Post*, almost the only first-class organs of the party in question. In the west a very important place is occupied by the *Western Morning News* (1860), published at Plymouth, a well-written paper of professedly independent views, but with a decided Liberal and Nonconformist—or perhaps more strictly speaking Evangelical—bias. An older west-country Liberal organ is the *Bristol Mercury*, which dates from 1790; the Conservatives have an excellent representative in the same city in the *Bristol Times and Mirror* (1865).

The leading newspapers of Scotland also incline chiefly to the Liberal side in politics, though up to a very recent date the oldest Edinburgh journal held Tory views. The *Edinburgh Courant*, originally started in 1718, was for many years one of the best papers in Scotland; in 1886 it was incorporated with the *Glasgow News* to form a national Tory paper under the title of the *Scottish News*, which, however, though admirably got up and well written, was not successful, and survived only a year or two. The most truly national paper of Scotland—not using the word

“ national ” in any spirit of silly particularism—is the *Scotsman*, started by Charles Maclaren and William Ritchie in 1817, which has always retained the prominent position it assumed at first. As the *Scotsman* holds firmly to the older Liberalism professed by the Unionist party, the followers of Mr. Gladstone’s new policy have recently started in opposition to it a journal of their own called the *Scottish Leader*, which immediately attained a large circulation. Out of Edinburgh the *North British Mail* (Glasgow, 1847), the *Dundee Advertiser* (1801), and farther north, the *Aberdeen Free Press* (1855) are among the leading Liberal papers. The *Glasgow Herald* (1779), an ably-written and influential journal, is independent in politics, though with a tendency to Conservatism. The *Aberdeen Journal* (1746) is the only important Conservative daily. A special interest attaches to the last-named paper from the fact that its first number appeared two days after the battle of Culloden, of which it gave the earliest detailed account.

In Ireland the political events of the last twelve years have done much to increase journalistic literature, especially among the followers of the late Mr. Parnell. Passing over many newspapers cleverly enough written in that tone of invective, which as being at once an exciting and an easy form of composition, has a special

attraction for the youthful journalist, we need only mention the old-established *Freeman's Journal*, published at Dublin. The chief Conservative organs are the *Irish Times* and the *Daily Express*, both Dublin papers; the *Northern Whig*, published at Belfast, represents the Liberal Unionists of Ulster.

The amount of weekly papers in circulation during our period would be far beyond our powers of chronicling. Among these is one class by itself, that of the Sunday papers, which are in reality daily papers published once a week, if we may be allowed the expression,—that is, they aspire simply to fill the vacant place left by the non-appearance of the others on that one day. The *Observer*, which dates from 1792, and the *Sunday Times*, which is thirty years younger, are the most important among these. The *Sunday Sun*, started in the present year by Mr. T. P. O'Connor, is a happy instance of that journalism which forms itself upon the models furnished by the United States. Some more special notice must be taken of those of a particularly literary character. Of these we find some five current in 1837, the *Examiner*, the *Literary Gazette*, the *Atlas*, the *Spectator*, and the *Athenæum*. The first-named had been started by John and Leigh Hunt in 1808, and carried on by them for some years with an especial vigour in the political

department, which made them familiar with the internal arrangements of a prison. The newspaper subsequently passed into the hands of Dr. Fellowes, who appointed as its editor Albany Fonblanque, of whom we have already had occasion to speak. Fonblanque continued to edit it for many years with great independence of tone both in literary and political matters, and that keen, satirical humour for which he was unmatched among his contemporaries. For nearly twenty years Fonblanque *was* the *Examiner*, and though his staff was able and well chosen, it was to him alone that the public listened. When he got the government appointment with which Lord John rewarded his great political services, and John Forster succeeded him in the editorship, the fire seemed to go out of the *Examiner* at once, though Fonblanque was still an occasional contributor. To Forster succeeded Mr. Henry Morley, another genuine man of letters, indefatigable at his work, but it was no use. All the king's horses and all the king's men could not put the old spirit into the *Examiner* again. It dragged on for many years and had a little false resurrection some twenty years later, but it was but a flash in the pan, and the veteran came to a rather inglorious end in 1880.

The *Literary Gazette* had a shorter and less distinguished career. Started in 1817 by William

Jerdan (1782-1869), a Scotch journalist of great perseverance and no inconsiderable talent, it flourished under his care for a third of a century, during which time he was as much the guiding spirit of the paper as Fonblanque was of the *Examiner*. After Jerdan gave it up, the *Gazette* struggled on for twelve more years and died of exhaustion in 1862. It was, like the *Athenæum*, and the later *Academy*, a purely literary paper. It is a misfortune of our confined space that we can only mention such journals together with those that are half literary and half political. The *Atlas* belonged to the latter class. It was started in 1826 with much *éclat* "on the largest sheet ever printed," under the editorship of Robert Stephen Rintoul (1788-1858), previously the first editor of the *Dundee Advertiser*. The *Atlas* was, however, a gigantic failure; editor and contributors were soon at loggerheads, and only agreed on the necessity of flying from their unfortunate paper, which, however, managed to live on somehow in obscurity for many years. The date or manner of its death are scarcely known to the most diligent inquirers. Rintoul proceeded in 1828 to found a far more enduring organ in the *Spectator*, which he conducted for thirty years with great credit. On his death in 1858, however, the new management, as represented by the present editors, Mr. Meredith Townsend and Mr.

Richard Holt Hutton, brought it to a height which its first editor had never reached, both as a political and literary journal. The *Spectator* is specially distinguished by the thoughtful tone of its writing, the almost Quixotic fairness of its judgments, and the profoundly religious spirit which pervades its more serious articles.

The *Athenæum* was also started in 1828 by James Silk Buckingham (1786-1855), a distinguished traveller and wild speculator in the field of newspaper enterprise, its first editor being Dr. Henry Stebbing (1799-1883), author of *Lives of the Italian Poets*, and other works. In a short time it fell into the hands of John Sterling and Frederick Denison Maurice, who sold it after a while to Charles Wentworth Dilke (1789-1864), to whom its past and present prosperity is chiefly due. For some fifteen years Dilke was his own editor; his rule is memorable for the effect produced in the world of literature by his absolute incorruptibility and impartiality. The puffing of particular publishers' books by hireling critics was even in our era a recognised and hardly censured practice; it is due to the *Athenæum* to say that the absolutely independent judgments which it meted out to all alike did much to put a stop to this. In later days the *Athenæum* declined a little under the guidance of William Hepworth Dixon (1821-79), but revived again fully under

its present editor, Mr. Norman Maccoll. The *Athenæum* is a paper entirely devoted to literature, science, and art.

Among later weekly papers we are forced to leave out almost all mention of many ephemeral publications in which it was not want of talent that failed to ensure success. The *Leader*, founded by George Lewes in 1849, was as clever as it was unsuccessful; the *Reader*, set up by John Malcolm Ludlow in 1863, staggered on through its four years of life fairly weighed down by the combination of genius among its contributors. The same might be said of the *Critic* and other dead and gone publications. A very different fortune awaited the *Saturday Review*, which was started in 1855 by A. J. Beresford Hope, with John Douglas Cook, formerly editor of the *Chronicle*, at its head. The *Saturday* has changed little in the thirty-seven years of its existence, except in the fact that its politics, which were at first wildly independent, have consolidated into a somewhat high and dry form of Toryism. There is the same smart writing and the same trenchant criticism under the editorship of Mr. Walter Herries Pollock as in the earliest free-lance days of Cook's supremacy, but its writers would be the first to laugh now at the idea of a crusade against the *Times*.

The *Academy*, a purely literary journal, was

set up in 1869 by the late Charles Edward Cutts Birch Appleton, and at first issued fortnightly. It is now the weekly organ of the highest culture and the loftiest criticism, and is remarkable for its system of having every article signed. More recent and more mundane journals are the *Scots Observer*, subsequently styled the *National Observer*, founded by Mr. William Ernest Henley in 1888, a clever young review, Conservative in politics and impudent in literature, and the *Speaker*, a Gladstonian weekly, started in opposition to the *Spectator* under the direction of Mr. Thomas Wemyss Reid, formerly editor of the *Leeds Mercury*. The *Anti-Jacobin*, a clever but short-lived paper, edited by Mr. Frederick Greenwood, should be included in the list.

We carefully steer clear of all technical journals, but some special attention must be paid to the leading religious papers. The earliest important Church of England paper is the *Record*, which dates from 1828 and represents the Evangelical party: it is now published once a week. A more important paper is the *Guardian*, a weekly publication started in 1846, which professes High Church doctrines. The *Nonconformist*, founded by Edward Miall (1809-81) in 1841, is the organ of the political Dissenter and can hardly be called a religious paper at all. The *Watchman*, dating from 1835, represents the important Wesleyan

communion. The *Tablet*, of which Frederick Lucas (1812-55), afterwards M.P. for Meath, was in 1840 the first editor, is the Roman Catholic organ.

It is a somewhat rapid descent from these estimable journals to what is perhaps the lowest form that journalism has yet reached, even in these days of Americano-mania. It is, however, some comfort to think that we are not much worse than our fathers; indeed, that Theodore Hook's *John Bull*—now the most irreproachable of weeklies with a special ecclesiastical connection,—was a good deal more objectionable than any modern society journals. To these latter we find ourselves obliged to devote a line or two. The first and by far the least objectionable of the class, the *World*, appeared in 1874, edited by Mr. Edmund Yates, already well known as a brilliant journalist and novelist. It was exceedingly smartly written, Mr. Lucy, who contributed the Parliamentary sketches, Mr. Labouchere, who did the financial articles, and other journalists of approved merit being among the contributors; it contained as a *feuilleton* one of Messrs. Besant and Rice's best novels, the *Golden Butterfly*, and the very novelty of the plan gave it a certain piquancy. The *World* had soon a host of imitators. In 1877 Mr. Labouchere seceded and established *Truth*, a journal of his own,

which has attained a very wide popularity which it no doubt deserves. It is amusing to the unprejudiced observer to find half-a-dozen pages chronicling the movements of the nobility followed by another half dozen of abuse of the "privileged classes"; but if it is this for which the public yearns, the man of business will give it to them. Of the minor "society papers" the less said the better. An exception must be made in favour of *Vanity Fair*, which has long been preserved from obscurity by the admirable caricatures of Mr. Pellegrini and Mr. Leslie Ward. Of sporting papers in general we are not called upon to treat, but may mention the name of the *Field* as belonging to a higher class. Besides furnishing an exhaustive record of all sports and pastimes for the week, it occasionally produces some interesting discussions in natural history. Its first editor in 1843 was Mark Lemon, but the *Field* never prospered till it came into the hands of the late Mr. Serjeant Cox; the same may be said of its companion—or at least housemate—the *Queen*, a paper for ladies, originally established by Mr. S. O. Beeton in 1861. *Land and Water*, another journal of field sports, owes its origin to the secession of Frank Buckland—who remained its editor till his death—from the *Field*, to which he had long been a contributor.

Comic journalism is a side of the profession

which is not to be neglected, and comic journalism in England means *Punch*. The appearance of this extraordinarily successful paper was preceded by various tentative efforts such as Gilbert à Beckett's *Figaro in London* and Douglas Jerrold's *Punch in London*. At last in July 1841 appeared the first number of *Punch, or the London Charivari*. The question of who was its originator has been much disputed; according to Mr. Punch himself, speaking on the recent occasion of his jubilee, "Lemon and Last and Mayhew would probably agree to divide between them the early honours, as they shared the early responsibility." Last was the printer. Mark Lemon (1809-70) was the first editor, a position which he retained for nearly thirty years. Among the early contributors were Horace Mayhew, author of the *Greatest Plague in Life*, and other farces, and his brother Henry; Douglas Jerrold (1805-57), a brilliant journalist and dramatist; Gilbert à Beckett (1811-56), whose *Comic Histories*, *Comic Blackstone*, etc., were sometimes as funny as they laboriously strove to be; Albert Smith, and after a short time Thackeray. To these must be added a noble company of illustrators headed by John Leech, "Dicky" Doyle, and Tenniel, whom it does not fall within our province to chronicle. Mark Lemon was succeeded as editor in 1870 by Charles Shirley Brooks (1815-74), author of the *Silver Cord*, *Sooner or*

Later, and other novels and plays, and he by Tom Taylor (1817-80), an extremely successful dramatist. On Tom Taylor's death, the present editor, Mr. Francis Cowley Burnand assumed the reins of government. *Punch* has often fluctuated, both in merit and in circulation, since its early days, but on the whole it has kept wonderfully up to its original high standard, and has certainly never been approached by any other English comic paper.

A word remains to be said about the leading illustrated papers. The *Illustrated London News* is of old date, having been founded in 1842 by Herbert Ingram (1811-60), afterwards M.P. for Boston. Its commencement was very modest, but when once the idea of an illustrated paper had been thoroughly impressed upon the public mind, it became more ambitious and soon attained a very large circulation. The illustrations were of course the chief point looked to, but the literature was not neglected either, and care was always taken to have a competent writer as literary editor, and others on the staff. "Echoes of the Week" were till recently regularly supplied to the *Illustrated News* by Mr. G. A. Sala, and Mr. James Payn now does something of the same work. After many years of practically unchallenged supremacy, the first serious rival to the *Illustrated* arose in rather a curious way. On the staff of

that paper were two artists, George and William Thomas. George died, and his brother, wishing to issue a memorial volume showing some of his work, applied to the authorities of the paper for the wood-blocks required, which, however, were refused him. In high dudgeon Mr. Thomas left the *Illustrated*, and shortly afterwards founded its great rival the *Graphic* in 1869. To this venture, which has been highly successful, Mr. Thomas added in 1890 the *Daily Graphic*, an insane enterprise, as it seemed to outsiders, which has nevertheless prospered. In 1891 a very formidable rival appeared to both the older papers in *Black and White*, a journal which keeps up perhaps a higher standard of art in its illustrations, and at the same time provides the reading public with literary matter of the first class. But of this new competition what will result is as yet beyond the power of man to predict.

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